



THUNDER CAPE FROM THE KAMINISTIQUIA.

*Can. P.*

7.


TALES  
OF  
WESTERN LIFE,

LAKE SUPERIOR AND THE CANADIAN PRAIRIE.

BY  
H. R. A. POCOCK.

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III.

TO THE  
"RIDERS OF THE PLAINS,"  
THE GALLANT  
NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE,

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DEDICATED.



## PREFACE.

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**I**N the following pages an attempt has been made to describe certain phases of Western Life and Scenery in Canada, and to present some of the peculiarities which distinguish western from more civilized communities elsewhere.

It must not however be supposed that men and women in the North-West are of necessity picturesque and barbarous; for indeed the towns and villages are all complete models of their kind. the women have harmoniums and social differences, choir practices, and an exhaustive knowledge of their neighbours' affairs; the men look after the politics and the weather, go to church when not too lazy, and are sometimes depraved enough to carry umbrellas. The farmer's house has the proper garrison of flies, the furniture is as comfortless as he could wish, and at the harvest a western growl is much the same as a down east growl. The cooking and eating on the Plains, the flirting and the marrying, the births, the funerals, and the taxes, are imitated from the same amenities in the favoured East. If the enterprising Mrs. Brown imports at a great expense a servant girl, the latter promptly gets married, and the mistress writes to her friends at home that the country is therefore a delusion and a fraud, and it rained all last week, and Mr. Brown has an awful cold, and a strange cat has come to board and had a litter of kittens in the back kitchen. But for all that, and it's bad enough to be sure, the logical Mrs. Brown knows that even if she quarrels with the country, the weather, Mr. B——, and the kittens, she yet enjoys all modern inconveniences in her western home, she would never be satisfied until she got back if she did go away, and the monthly bills don't come in more frequently now than of old.

But this book is not about the citizens and the farmers, nor even that all absorbing topic of emigration; nor does it pretend to describe the country as seen by the distinguished visitor, who is conducted to the Missions, Indian Agencies, swell farms, and other show places, dines with the chief officials, and writes a book of his adventures, *cuisine*, and opinions while on the war path.

I have ventured to describe only the portions of the community that do not live in the routine of civilized life, to tell the truth about them, to do justice to them, to represent as far as possible the action of law and other circumstance upon such elements; to describe them before they are all gone, swept away by the advance of Mrs. Grundy. Great care has been taken to depict justly the phenomena of nature, the aspects of the seasons, and the typical scenery of the regions described. The style of conversation has been copied at the risk of appearing awkward and unnatural to those not accustomed to the peculiar manner of western men. The scenes, incidents, and characters of those sketches are nearly all taken directly from life, but combined for the purposes of fiction; but should any offence be taken by friends and acquaintances at the relation in this disguised form of their adventures, it is to be hoped that my sincere apology will be accepted.

Greatly indebted for candid criticism and other assistance to numerous friends, I must more especially thank Mr. Walpole Roland, the author of a recent valuable work on Western Algoma, for help that has gone far to ensure the success of these pictures of Western Life.

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY, 1888.

# INDEX.

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## *Lake Superior.*

A USELESS MAN.....	3
THE ICE CORTÈGE.....	10
THE WHISKEY RUNNERS.....	14
THE LEGEND OF THUNDER.....	35

## *The Prairie.*

THE LEAN MAN.....	46
A NIGHT HALT.....	72
D'ANQUERA.....	78
THE TRAILS.....	92
LOST.....	96
ERIC.....	115
DEATH OF WAKUZZA.....	148
BUCK STANTON.....	152
"LIGHTS OUT!".....	157

## *The Wilderness.*

THE LAURENTIDES.....	160
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# LAKE SUPERIOR.



## A USELESS MAN.

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FROM THE TORONTO "WEEK."

I WAS sent to survey a three mile section of the Canadian Pacific Railway on the Bay of St. Ignace, Lake Superior. The lay of the land was that of a house roof, and the grade was at the base of an eight-hundred foot cliff. Most of the roadway was cut out of solid rock, with here and there a bridge over a ravine, or a tunnel under a spur to break monotony.

The work was half finished when I was visited by the District Engineer, who brought with him a boy whom he proposed to leave to my tender mercies. The apprentice was described as an interesting and amiable youth, and had improved the occasion by scaling the precipice overhead. He had also succeeded in getting lost; and we were organizing a search party, when he favoured us with his presence and was introduced. He presented an interesting and rather torn up appearance, and was dressed in brown

corduroy; he was of slender build, with very marked, irregular features, a good skin, and soft expressive eyes. He began our acquaintance by expressing doubts as to whether the formation was metamorphic or plutonic, exhibited some very poisonous berries which he described as having an agreeable flavour, and borrowed five dollars.

Next day we went to work and measured out one of the big rock cuts. I tried Eustace with the chain, the measure, the rod, and in all these he showed and cheerfully admitted the grossest incompetence. His talent for making blunders was marvellous, and the cause of it all was—thinking. Often when his negligence stopped the work of the party, I feared to rouse him from meditations that I felt might benefit the human race. In climbing he was slow and heavy; in locating he was blind and obtuse. I set him to mark the stakes, and blessed him when he forgot their sequence. Before evening I was convinced that he was entirely useless.

Whenever he got a chance he would go up among the cliffs and get lost. When he did turn up he was generally more or less damaged from falls, and always laden with amethysts, herbs,

ores, sketches, and ideas. He would favor me with his ideas on anatomy, speculative astronomy, submarine navigation, statuary, boating, and kindred topics. He would draw plans of houses, and of cities; and sometimes on the sly write verses. He never inflicted these on me however, and I forgave him because he was a good listener. In the evenings I tried him at the "estimates"; but he would make little digressions, estimating the velocity of the earth, or drawing heads on waste paper,—and was incompetent. He was at home with logarithms, and stuck at a common fraction: I did the estimates alone.

Notwithstanding the fact that he hindered my work, I grew to like the boy. He would ask questions that set my hair on end without showing any effort, or seeking effect. Once he asked me if I thought him a coward, and I could not say; but when a stone from one of the blasts knocked the paint pot out of his hand, he only observed that it was a wasteful method of blasting.

A day came that I had been dreading for weeks: the Black Cape had to be measured. I postponed the job until the afternoon, walking up and down brooding over the difficulty. I told my

party that one of us must be lowered over the edge of the cliff, and swinging out from the face of the rock must make a conspicuous mark with a paint brush at a point that I should name. The narrowness of the ledge from which the work must be done, a spot only to be reached by ropes and ladders from the side, the weakness of our only ropes; the difficulty of keeping a clear head while swinging a hundred feet in the air; all these things made the operation very dangerous. I could not do the work myself for my presence was necessary at the tripod: my men were too heavy for the rope, and Eustace—"Mr. B—I'm going down that cliff." Eustace was standing before me rather pale, and his eyes glittering. As he walked away I could distinctly see that his limbs were trembling: I must say I had never thought the lad was so easily moved. After dinner I told my chainman: "Sinclair, you'll have to do that cliff business." The three started the ascent by the ropes and ladders from the grade; the rodman first, Eustace after him, and then the chainman. The rope was being attached to a small cedar at the ledge as I adjusted my instrument. The lens being focussed, still looking through it, I bade them lower away. In the inverted picture presented within the instrument,

I saw a human form hanging on a rope swing into view. "Lower, five feet—lower yet—stop, one foot up—three to the right, a little to the right—more, an inch higher—a little to the left—steady, now mark there." I finished signalling these directions from the distance with my hands; and leaving the instrument, looked towards the cliff. The men above were in great distress, and the voice came up from below: "Cease lowering—hold on I say!" It was Eustace swinging in mid-air, and the cedar yielding! A moment of confusion—I shouted directions—the distance was too great, and I could hear the navvies below join in the shouting. The cedar was crashing down the cliff with an avalanche of stones. The men above were safe, but Eustace——

From out of the cloud of dust I heard his voice: "Have you got any more cedars, up there?"

When the dust cleared the cedar was floating in the Lake below, but Eustace was hanging on the face of the cliff below the impending ledge. How he got free from the rope in time I do not know, or how even then he hung on the bare perpendicular face of the cliff. We recovered part of the rope, and took it up the ladders, drawing up one



of the guide ropes to eke out the length. Some men were piling blankets and sacks upon the rocks below in order to break the fall. Hastily we lowered the rope and called out to Eustace. From below he was seen to swing outwards from the cliff, holding only by one foot and hand—his last support gave way, and he fell into space—a tremendous wrench threatened to drag us from the ledge—he had caught the rope and was swinging like a pendulum in mid air. As we lowered away we felt him swarming down to the lower end—a moment more and they were calling loudly from below for more rope, and the last yard was in our hands. “How much more?” “Twenty feet.” We gave up the hold of one man, and lowered a little; we gave up the second man, and one bore the strain alone—the strain was more than one could bear: “Look out!” There was a dull thud—a cry of expectation—and three ringing cheers!

When I had descended to the grade again Eustace led me away from the crowd, he had enjoyed a faint in the meantime he said, and thrust a scrap of stone into my hand: “What’s this? I found it where the mark was to be made.” “Why, it’s silver!”


Next day Eustace told me that he thought that it would be advisable for him to go down to Port Arthur and have his teeth doctored: "Because I have neuralgia you know—and really the diet here does not suit me."

I have had many a worse investment than in the shares of a certain mine found on the face of a cliff by a thoroughly useless man.

## THE ICE CORTÈGE.

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FROM THE TORONTO "WEEK," AUGUST, 1887.



**T**HUNDER Bay is formed by a monster island rock, and by a peninsular extending into Lake Superior, whose cliffs on either side are vertical and of immense height. Thunder Cape indeed, from its resemblance to the human form, from its great size and desolation is looked upon with awe by the Indians, and as the sleeping Nani-bijou, worshipped. The Bay is almost landlocked, and can be entered only by two straits, one of which is that between the Cape and Island.

To-night the Giant is veiled in a soft mist, and the moonlight where it can pierce that mist is faint and ghostly. Where the precipice towers up some thirteen hundred feet above the bay, there is a little shanty by the water's edge. The vast wall hangs over it, its blackness more awful by contrast with the summit silvered in the moonlight. The mountain seems to breathe as the night sets in, and


the mournful cedars tremble, as the flowers on the altar tremble at the sound of a cathedral organ.

There is a lamp in the shanty, and its light illumines the ice below the window, showing a path leading out on to the bay. The wind is rousing, and the great Spirit will breathe heavily to-night.

A half-breed comes out of the shanty, and stands in the doorway looking across the bay. The light from the house illumines his sash, a medley of claret, orange, and vermillion, contrasting strongly with his homespun clothes. The black hair falls from under a cap of brown fur; and his deep eyes and red brown skin look strange under the vague moonlight.

The voice of his young wife is heard within in earnest dissuasive tones; but half angrily he persists in his enterprise; and, when she has come to the door and kissed him, he throws a sack of fish over his shoulder, calls his dog, and sets out across the bay. She watches him as his form is fading slowly into the dim distance, and soon he is alone upon the Bay despite the warning of the Spirit Cape.

She looks up at the black precipice, and something of its gloom is in her heart as she turns away. She sits down on a bench and mends her husband's old moccasins; she busies herself preparing delicacies to welcome his return; she turns down the light and sits brooding by the stove.



The wind is howling along the cliff; the snow is driving on the bay; the Giant is breathing in his sleep. She is filled with dread presentiment, but is weary. The snow drifts are hurled against the house; the cedars are writhing, tortured in the tempest. There is a scratching sound at the door—but she has sunk upon the ground and is sleeping; the dog without, his dog, frozen and sheeted with ice, is howling piteously—but she never heeds.

She stands—her eyes are open and filled with yearning love—she leans forward and mutters in her sleep. She throws a plaid about her head, and the folds cover her. She has gone out, and the dog is leaping about her, barking, and looking towards the bay—then, uttering a sharp strange low cry, he runs before. She accepts its guidance on the rotten ice; the drift is blinding, the storm is rising still, but she pays no heed—she never swerves or turns as she goes to meet her death.

\* \* \* \* \*

The ice has broken up on Thunder Bay, and is moving through the strait between the Cape and Island, on its way to the open lake. The Spirit of the Cape looks down on the glittering floe: the Island and the Cape look down in sorrow. The ice is sweeping through the mighty gate as it has for many a thousand years before; but never has it moved the cliffs to sorrow until to-day. In the centre of the floe is a larger fragment than its fellows. It is studded with clear emerald pools, fretted with a lacework of pure white ice, and in the centre is a mound of snow outlined with turquoise shadows. There lie two human forms clasped in each other's arms, taking their rest together upon the drifting ice, and lying upon the snowy forms is a dog.

The ice cortège advances to the Lake, and there will the mourners bury their human dead. How grand a pageant this sepulture in the crystal waters under the pure sunlight!

And there will be a day when the mighty Lake will render up its dead, taken away from the earth by an all-seeing God.

## THE WHISKEY RUNNERS.

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**W**HY what's up Fred? You haven't a word to say to a chap all day—you goes growling along as though both of us was to be hanged when the loads was sold out."

"Oh shut up, for heaven's sake : a man must be talking away like a durned old woman or you think he's got jim-jams."

"That's your play, is it? Well, I trump. It won't do Fred, worth a cent. Here you goes like a bear with a sore head, as though you'd been robbed of a new five cent tail. Why what more could you have man? A good dog train, dry moccasins, plenty of tobacco, any amount of whiskey, fine weather, and a good supper ahead! Get up there, Smeller! Git up, you —————!" And Tom reached out the bitter end of his whip, and caught the leader of his team a welt on the off ear that made him uplift a hearty yell, and all the other dogs inly shudder.

"Taint that, Tom," said his chum confiden-

tially, as he jumped on his carriage and proceeded with the solemn ceremony of invoking a light for his pipe: "It's the durned meanness of the thing. Think how these railway men would get on if it wasn't for the likes of us."

"How they might get on, eh—get on the first boat in the Spring, and off to the "Landing" (Port Arthur) for a three hundred dollar drunk that'd eternally clean bust them for good-and-all, instead of letting down easy like with a small spree between times that don't do no harm."

"Don't see it—don't see it, nohow. What call have they for to go and get drunk at all, anyway?"

"Why what do you get on the spree for regular as soon as we strike the first saloon?"

"Blamed if I know."

"Why, isn't it because you kind'er want to have a whooping time, and nothing better turns up, so you go to Black Auntie's, and set the bills a-flyīng, and have a bully good time 'till it's all gone?" Why what else could you do when you've got lots of wealth. You can't spend it all in board and clothes?"

"Why not bank it?"



"Bank it? Catch me banking it! What! after being chased three hundred miles down the line from the "Landing" to Pic and Michipicoten and three hundred miles back keen jump—with any amount of storms, and perhaps a two hundred dollar fine to finish up on! I say bank it! Whoop—I'm a wolf, and its my night to howl—to h-o-w-l! Let me out! Let me out! Whoop! Ky—aaaii-i-i-i!—!—!"

"You're tough, you are! You'll have a wild and woolly time, you will! Have a big time in gaol; guess you'll have a big time and no end—but what then? what then, eh?"

"Well, I guess the world owes me a living, anyhow; and when the ranches get too hot, I'll turn an honest dollar stealing cattle or selling whiskey; and you bet I'll have a gay old time until I go under. That's what this chicken says."

"And what then?"

"What then? I dunno—Let's see: I dunno." And then they both relapsed into silence while Tom solemnly filled his pipe and evoked a light.

"Hullo! Say Fred, what's that coming out of



Mazukama yonder? Well I'll be eternally chewed up if aint Bertie."

"Full cry too," said the other, "about time we was out of this, eh?"


"Out of this? No, hold on—let her flicker!" and pulling the dogs up to a solemn walk, Tom began to make signals to two detectives, who having come from under cover of the land, were now in hot pursuit and about a mile distant.

"Lucky they're on foot," said Fred, as he set his carriage rather ahead of the other, but appeared to enjoy the game notwithstanding; for he was by no means averse to a little innocent sport with the Law; which, as represented by the detectives employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate, did not inspire much reverence.

To the sunny Australian with his merry blue eyes and sunburnt face, no observer would have attributed the character of a law breaker; and half his friends thought, from his voice and manner, that he was an Englishman and a sailor; but, perhaps he had picked up his unconventional half childish air and manner from the life of the wild free prairie, for the plains as well as the mountains



and, the sea can breed children of Nature in Nature's own wise way. But if Tom represented the Prairie, his chum no less represented Lake Superior with his gloomy moods and occasional rousing storms; and one could read well the meaning of his deep set eyes, his firm jaw, and dusky countenance; for they meant unalterable strength of will, and passion, and courage. Fred was a ruined man.



The detectives Bertie and Slicke were gaining rapidly on the dog trains, which were creeping along as though tired out, while their masters sat on the sleighs with their snowshoes at hand; and the pursuers pursued on foot the rugged trail, bent on effecting a capture. The trail was one leading over the ice along the North Channel from Nipigon to the eastern end of the islands, and thence skirted the open coast as far as Michipicoten some two hundred miles away. The whiskey runners were bound eastward with their carriages, each, drawn by a team of seven dogs, loaded with whiskey. When the detectives got within hailing distance the game began.

"Well I guess you fellows are coming down to the Landing with us, aint it?"

"Not by a long chalk."

The dogs now kept the distance at about a hundred and fifty yards, and the silence was presently broken by Tom saying:

"Well, what are you going to do about it, anyway?"

"Wait!" yelled Slicke, "and you'll soon find out."

"Sorry not to oblige you, gentlemen. Got an appointment at Michipicoten. Any messages?"

"Say Bertie," cried Fred, "hope your wife's getting round nicely? Sorry to hear she's down."

"Thanks; much better by last accounts. Pretty close call, though. How long are you fellows going to keep up this monkey business?"

"Oh, I dunno; guess it'll be as long as you grind the old organ, governor. Say, Italian man, want something to grease the old machine?"

"You bet."

"See here!" and Tom dropped a bottle of his best liquor on the trail, the only seizure made that day. Having pacified the Law, and gone through

the "So long!" "Good bye." "Au revoir," &c., proper to the occasion; the peddlers slipped on their snowshoes, whipped up the dogs, and soon left nothing in sight to the detectives but the long swaying motions of the runners, and the gliding carriages beside them, melting into the blue-grey mists of evening. Soon after, the two travellers reached a point where they had agreed to separate, Fred being bound to the East end of the Line, and Tom intending to sell out among the camps on the road back to Nipigon, and afterwards to take up a 'cache' he had left at Camp Roland near that place. So, after drinking each other's healths, and hearty farewells, the two set off on their respective ways, Tom intending to do a good business that night at McRae's Camp in Gravel Bay.

Knowing that the camp he had chosen was reputed to have a bad cook, our hero abstained from supper, contenting himself with a few hard-tacks as he went along; and finally located himself in the bush near the big log building where the men slept. After giving the dogs their evening ration of fish, he proceeded to decoy the railway men to his place of business. He was before long surrounded by a stalwart crowd of navvies, regaling themselves at the rate of twenty-five

cents a drink; and before the stars were out he was supplying his patrons with good wholesome water at the same rate, without their knowing the difference. When none of his customers could hold any more, Tom securely cached his load under a snow bank; and, taking a bottle in his pocket to propitiate the host, he passed the remainder of the night in a comfortable bunk provided at the shanty of an acquaintance.

Bright and early the following morning, Tom got the dogs harnessed, and proceeded to a small camp perched among the rocks some three hundred feet above the channel; and, having run his team into a deep black ravine close by, he enjoyed an excellent breakfast and a cigar at the camp building. Leaving word with the cook that he had some lemonade for sale down in the ravine, he went thither, and passed the greater part of the forenoon in disposing of his merchandise at five dollars for each well watered bottle; but refused to sell by the drink lest his doings should attract the attention of any Engineer, for the Surveyors were Justices of the Peace for the prevention of the liquor traffic among the navvies.

Gravel Bay is probably as wild and rough a


locality as any in the Laurentian wilderness. For some three miles the coast consists of a line of cliffs from eight to nine hundred feet high, with spurs, crevasses, stone slides, and vertical precipices of every variety, the general plane being that of a mansard roof. Along the base of the cliff runs the line of the great railway, a succession of curves, deep cuttings, side cuts and tunnels, at a rate they say of \$250,000 a mile. It was along this grade that Tom proceeded; and although there were few men to be seen in that part because the grading was complete, Tom was not disposed to show his cargo in broad daylight, and passed leisurely on. Just before he reached Death's Head Peak, he encountered an acquaintance, and remained for some time in conversation with him; and, while talking, his sharp eyes noticed a man set off from McClellan and Fay's camp, which was about a quarter of a mile beyond the Peak. The man was on snowshoes, and struck out across the Bay towards MacRae's Camp. Tom left his friend, and went on some little distance upon the grade, still watching the stranger, whom he presently recognised as Bertie the detective, doubtless bent on his capture. But just when Tom got immediately under Death's Head Peak, a vertical cliff or spur from the heights

above, that towered somewhat over a hundred feet directly over the road, Bertie turned and saw the carriage and the law breaker, and made directly for the Peak. Tom stood with his back against the cliff waiting to see what Bertie would do, and chuckling quietly to himself. Bertie took off his snowshoes at the foot of the dump, and proceeded to crawl up; and when he reached the level there stood Tom with an amused smile on his face awaiting developments. "Well," gasped Bertie, "I guess I got you;" and he came forward with his revolver at full cock and levelled. Tom was still smiling and made no move, but presently observed: "By the Great Horn Spoon of the Palefaces, Bertie, what *are* you gaping at?" Still watching the detective, Tom began to look as though he meant business; and, stooping down, he picked up a cylindrical canister, which he raised at arms length over his head. Bertie was about twelve paces off. There is some thing about the eyes of a real prairie man very like the steel blue eye of a revolver, not less clear, not less stern, not less persuasive.

"Now Bertie, don't let that toy go off by mistake. *When you make your second pace down comes the cliff!*"



Now Reader, when Tom said that you couldn't have seen Bertie's tail for dust—the flight of birds was nothing to the flight of that bird—his precipitation was simply immense. Persuasive as a revolver may be with a real man behind it, it is nothing to the argumentative cogency of a canister of *nitro glycerine*. And, as the form of the retiring detective began to be at some distance, Tom solemnly drank his health out of the canister.



That night McClellan and Fay's camp had such a time that Tom completely sold out his load ; and next morning, after turning the empty kegs loose, he ballasted with a sack of frozen fish, bought from an Indian, and proceeded to Mazukama, the place from whence the detectives had made their first sally. On reaching the vicinity of the camp, Tom fed the dogs with some of the fish, and hung the sack up in a tree to prevent the hungry brutes getting to it while he was away having dinner. He was seated in the mess room of the camp enjoying the meal in company with the time-keeper, when the outer door opened, and the detective Slicke burst in and proceeded to take possession of our hero, who was too much amused by the idea of what would follow to make any remonstrance.

"What's the trouble Slicke, old man," said Tom; as, despite the heavy hand on his shoulder, he poured a second supply of tea into his dish. "Well, if you are pretty sharp set, you needn't eat me for Mazukama steak. I may be a pretty hard seed, but I'm not as tough as that by half. Why in thunder don't you take a seat and set to—sit down man!"—and in a somewhat sheepish manner the detective sat down.

"Now you just put those bracelets away 'til I chain you up for a bear afterwards; you fellows are too much given to sporting cheap jewellery. If you'll only behave yourself I'll stand drinks to the crowd," there were several persons present attracted by the signs of a row—"and we'll go down to the Magistrate afterwards and work the boss oracle. Who's the Beak in this here locality, anyway?"

There was some little silence after this, Tom probably having a soliloquy all to himself, for presently he broke out:

"Durned if I can see why these fellows get all the soft soap; *Justices of the Peace* because that they happen to be *Civil Engineers*; its little enough justice, peace, or civility that we poor runners

have of them, anyway. Finished Slicke? All right you fellows, come and see his lordship running the show."

When they reached the sleigh, Slicke, who had been putting on a few airs and graces of authority, ordered the prisoner to unload—which the prisoner accordingly didn't. The by-standers also told the detective that he might go somewhere where there was a warm climate to get flunkies; so he was obliged to set to work himself, and uncovered the carriage, calling on two others to witness the transaction. The load was duly inspected, and found to consist of a buffalo coat, a pair of Hudson's Bay blankets, and a few hard-tacks.

"Come, stop this fooling around, Slicke; don't you see the bag of bottles right over head?" Slicke did, and immediately began to climb up to the bough of a young balsam from which hung the sack of fish. Tom called the crowd to make room; and the dogs, seeing a stranger about to make off with their provisions, began to assemble under the tree, and impatiently await events. Disregarding the dogs, the detective dropped from the tree with the bag firmly clutched in one hand; and the dogs proceeded to make hair fly. Slicke

went down before the first rush, tightly clasping the bag in both arms; and for a few moments all was fur, hair, and feathers. When the detective, amid roars of applause, finally gained his feet, and stood with clenched fists menacing Tom, the latter coolly observed: "Give us a rest Slicke, old chap—you're altogether too fresh."

The detective without a particle of evidence to warrant an arrest, strode off into the bush to cool off; and the crowd returned jubilant to the Camp.

In the course of the afternoon the detective turned up; and Tom, while watching him closely, plunged into a confidential conversation with the cook. Before long the astute Whiskey Runner began to suspect Slicke's motive in loafing about the various buildings, and soon contrived to place himself and the cook in a place where, from behind a neighbouring corner, they could be easily overheard. It was not long before his suspicions were confirmed by the sound of suppressed breathing around that corner; and he immediately began to concoct a yarn about his intentions, all of which was greedily swallowed by both the cook and the eaves-dropper. He said that he was going to make

a run to Port Arthur for a fresh cargo, but go round in the direction of Nipigon first to put the detective off the track; he said there was some fear about the latter being too smart for him, and running at once to Port Arthur in order to catch him on his outset on the next trip, which ought not to be later than the first day of the next month; in answer to a question from the other he said that he always used to slip out of the town early by way of the Shuniah mine, as far as where the 'tote road' branched off towards Nipigon. Then Tom began to say the most dreadful things about the detective Slicke, and all the rest of them for that matter, and he more than once thought he heard the suppressed grinding of teeth round the corner. When Slicke was charged up to the muzzle, Tom went into supper with the Walking Boss who happened to come on the scene, and chuckled quietly to himself about the ruse all the time he was at table. Ten minutes after Tom had finished supper and had lit his pipe in one of the shanties, the detective Stevenson arrived at Mazukama with Fred as a prisoner, and half a load of whiskey on the carriage as evidence; and Tom, from the window of the shanty, saw his chum led handcuffed into one of the other buildings, while his dogs were unharnessed and fed in

the neighboring bush. Our hero was downcast ; and felt, as he strode off to feed his own dogs, as he would have expressed it 'mean.'

But from the first moment his quick brain was planning some form of escape for his chum, and presently a bright idea came as a match to a train of powder, and the plot was no sooner laid than fired. First he placed his own dogs conveniently, then brought those of his captive chum to the same spot ; a few minutes sufficed to harness both teams to one carriole, that of Fred ; a slip knot bound them to a tree, and a bush trail was open right ahead that would enable them defy pursuit if once they got the start. He had conjectured that the astute Slicke would not fail to set out that night on snowshoes in the direction of the Landing ; and that a supply of whiskey and a pack of cards could be made to keep him until the time when it suited the plotter to have him set forth, and to bring him to any condition that might be desired at the time of his starting. Our friend, having started the game of cards and whiskey, left his own hand to a bystander while he interviewed the Cook, and procured a file from the blacksmith. When the Cook was told that

the conversation of the afternoon had been overheard by the subject of it, he was easily roused to great indignation; and when Tom had sufficiently applied whiskey to the case, his excitable friend began to clamour for a whip to thrash the detective, with which Tom promptly supplied him. Our hero went away, leaving the Cook protesting that if Slicke ventured out of Camp that night he would thrash him into a jelly fish; and, on rejoining the card party, commenced to prime the other hero for the approaching combat. A little after eleven o'clock the game broke up, Slicke being in a most combant mood, and determined to catch Tom at Port Arthur at all costs. True to that gentleman's expectations, Slicke no sooner thought he was unobserved, then he slipped on a coat and his snowshoes, and set off on the first stage towards the town. Before he had been out of sight more than a minute, sounds of terrific combat were heard from the direction of the wharf; and Tom began to batter the door of the shanty where slept Stevenson and his prisoner, to such good purpose that, before the row was properly started, the officer of the law was rushing wildly to the rescue, leaving the door of the prison open, and no one within save Fred. A few sharp

words from his 'chum made the latter spring to his feet; and without the slightest hesitation both took to the bush. To reach the carriage, to slip the knot, to lash up the dogs was the work of a minute; but that minute had also roused the whole camp, the ruse was discovered, and at least fifty men headed by Stevenson and the Engineer in charge were already in hot pursuit. But a disorganised pursuit on foot was hardly to be expected to overtake a sleigh with fourteen dogs for a team; and the carriage, scarcely heavier than an ordinary toboggan, was flying like a rumour or a telegram through the bush. It would have been all right if the trail had only proceeded in a business like manner; but, as ill luck had it, it must needs cross the railway in full view of the camp, and then suddenly end at a little shanty under the trees. The delay caused by climbing the dump brought the pursuers within a few yards; two were actually ahead, so preventing flight in that direction; and the only course was to descend the dump on the other side, and, with the whole crowd at their heels, take to the thick woods on the far side. Consummate steering alone prevented the two men from being smashed against the trees as the dogs rushed madly through the undergrowth, which, as



they passed, swept against their faces, knocked off their caps, and sometimes severely bruised them. One of the lines broke, and brought them to a halt; and before the damage was repaired the pursuers were again upon them, and this time very nearly effected a capture. The knot tied—the dogs lashed with the fierce whip—again they began their flight; and, bruised and torn, at last they reached the bank, and plunged madly down the slope on to the smooth surface of the great Lake; then, as the baffled pursuers emerged from the bush, Tom who had recklessly pulled up to await their coming, yelled out:

“Bully for you Stevenson! Get there every time you don't fail! Many happy returns old man. Give my love to Slicke!”

The fury of the law must be left to the imagination as the crowd on the bank watched the carriage with its double team tearing gaily over the sea of snow, already but a speck in the distance, and rapidly being swallowed up in the night. To follow would have been madness, for the larger live stock of Mazukama consisted of three curs and a tom cat, and there was not a horse

for miles round ; so the detectives were fain to content themselves with a mutual disagreement which lasted until morning. The question then arose whether the camp should lose a good cook because he had pounded a bad detective ; and the cook having proved his charge of eaves-dropping, and several coming forward to assert that Slicke was drunk when he set out from the camp, the latter begged that the prisoner might be let off, as he did not want to get the poor fellow into a scrape ; and he withdrew his indictment. That afternoon the two detectives, on the information overheard by Slicke, set off together for Port Arthur to capture the Peddlers on their next outset from that town.

By aid of the file Fred was soon released from the handcuffs, and the two proceeded gaily to Camp Nipigon. The cache at Camp Roland having been brought forth in addition to the half load saved from Mazukama, everybody between Red Rock and Lake Helen was on the spree for three whole days, and all the whiskey fetched good prices. But our friends knew that it was time to close the business and seek occupation elsewhere, for the Lake Superior country was becoming too hot to hold young men of such enterprise. When

therefore they reached Port Arthur, it was only to take the first train for the West ; and they landed in Winnipeg with several hundred dollars, prepared to have a good time.

So it all ended happily ? No reader, that is just what it didn't. Breaking the laws of God and man never ends happily, and this case was no exception. It ended in that most horrible of all kinds of moral, physical, and financial ruin—Delirium Tremens.

## The Legend of Thunder.

Note by Walpole Roland, Esq., C.E., with which this ballad is headed in his recent work "Algoma West." "Among the most popular traditions touching the origin of this suggestive title "Thunder Cape," is the following as related in the Otchipiway, by "Welsaw," and very freely translated by a friend of the writer's:—"Long years ago while my great, great grandfather, then a young brave, was returning with a war party from "a bloody encounter with our foes (the Sioux) near Dog Mountain, a place "twenty-five miles north-west of the Kaministiquia River, their attention was suddenly arrested by loud and prolonged reverberations, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning. Ascending the heights overlooking the Kitchee Gamsee, (Lake Superior) an appalling sight met "their gaze—far out in the bay towards the east, where the 'Sleeping Giant,' Nanibijou usually reclined on his fleecy couch, all appeared in "flames, while at intervals great pinnacles or shafts of flame and black "clouds were driven upwards with terrible fury. . . . . Arriving at the "mouth of the Kaministiquia River they were told of the fate of two "hunters from a distant tribe who, regardless of repeated warnings, provoked the fiery spirit of the great 'Thunder Eagle' by ascending its home "in the cloud-capped cliff, and perished in the vain attempt to bring down "a great medicine. Previous to the advent of the white man our storms "were grander and more frequent, and only upon rare occasions indeed "could a view from a distance be obtained of the Cape or Nanibijou."

Behold the gentle waters lap against the Giant's side  
The playful whispers of the winds that by his slumber  
glide,  
The warm sun bending o'er his sleep, the breathing of  
the sea,  
The cool grey shadows nestled down beneath each  
fragrant tree.

5. The Monarch of this sombre land, he dwells in clouded  
state,  
Beside the portals of the East, where yonder mighty  
gate  
At morning sunders his broad leaves to let the daylight  
in,  
When Night must quit the Giant's throne, and con-  
qu'ring Day begin.  
'Tis then across the waters that the earliest sunlight  
laves
10. The myriad spirit forms that throng that pathway o'er  
the waves,  
The beings that come to take the form and humble  
garb of man,  
That come to labour and to love, to tread their des-  
tined span  
Of sorrow, sickness, and despair, of evil years and few,  
Before the Potter comes to make the broken vessels  
new.
15. We fathers, and our fathers saw, before ye White Men  
came,  
Yon mighty Giant heave in sleep, and breathe the  
sulphurous flame ;  
Have seen him roused to anger, lash these seas in  
furious wrath,  
And all the torrents of his ire in lightning pouring  
forth—  
Have seen him ever wrapt in smoke, and his tremen-  
dous form
20. Forever shrouded in his robe—his night robe of the  
storm ;  
But never saw his rugged sides bared to the day, till ye  
Brake through the mighty Gates as gods, the Masters  
of the Sea.
- Once from some nation far away two wand'ring hunters  
strayed,

Their birch canoe all patched and old, their dress of  
deerskin made ;

25. They rested in our Chieftain's lodge beside the stormy  
bay

Ere towards the setting sun in peace they should  
pursue their way.

They came towards the setting sun to seek his resting  
place,

Where all the spirits of our dead and all the human  
race

Dwell where the sky is ever bath'd in floods of sunset  
light,

30. The everlasting eventide that knows not death, or  
night,

Or fire, or flood, or drought, or war, where winter  
never reigns,

To the far happy Hunting Grounds upon the Golden  
Plains.

But when men of the Giant spoke, and his deep shroud  
of gloom,

And when they saw across the bay the clouded moun-  
tain loom,

35. And heard of the dread Thunder Bird whose nest is in  
the height,

Who guards the unassailed cliffs all wrapt in end-  
less night ;

And heard their fate who dared to seek his nest, and  
bring us down

The wondrous sacred medicine hid upon the mountain  
crown :

They laughed our fears to scorn, and said : " Should  
brave men danger fear ? "

40. " And what is danger if it bring the Life Hereafter  
near !

" He who hath sought through doubt and dread the  
Mystery of Life,

" And won a blessing for Mankind by warring giant  
strife

" With deathless gods, hath vanquish'd death, and in  
his body slain

" Lust, wrath, and darkness, self, and shame ; and from  
a beast's flesh free

45. " Stands naked—man—"

So o'er the breast of that still

moonlit sea

Led by the stranger braves we sped ; and all the night  
time long

The startled clouds fled past the moon, the sad wind's  
dirge like song

Wail'd in vague echoes down the heights, and moaned  
across the bay,

And moaned in tremulous low sighs from great cliffs  
far away.

50. So on the strangers sped—the spray that from their  
paddles gleam'd

Made in the wake a path whereon our long procession  
stream'd

A cortège to the grave—it seem'd that in that midnight  
gloom

Huge enemies stalked by and frown'd, and moments  
big with doom

Fled wailing lost into the night—Oh why should brave  
men die

55. While coward hearts of thousands fail, and win'g'd with  
terror fly!

So when the East was cold with dawn, and all the  
clouds were grey

The shadow of the mountain loom'd against the wak'-  
ning day.

'Twas then an earnest conclave pray'd that Manitou  
should save

The strangers who amid the clouds sought wisdom or  
a grave.

60. The agates rattled as their skiff touch'd light the sombre  
main—

We heard the solemn thunders warn, but warn the  
braves in vain.

With red plumes waving as they strode they passed  
along the shore

To where a clouded canyon loom'd through broken  
rocks and hoar ;

And high the ancient cliffs soar'd up on every side  
around,

65. And at their base the fragments lay, and brushwood  
strew'd the ground.

They, clamb'ring o'er the boulders, leapt from rock to  
rock, and climb'd

Right up amid the canyon's gloom, till troubled sight  
and mind

Had lost the tiny spots that moved among the shadows  
vast,

And every vestige of their forms passed from our sight  
at last.

70. Then morning instant sank to gloom, and gloom was  
steep'd in night,

The waters all so late at rest had crests of foaming  
white,

Our prayers assail'd and storm'd the heaven for ten-  
der youth, and age,

And the Great Spirit saved our barks amid the  
cyclone's rage.


The hurricanes swept by—a lull—a blast—a loud  
wild cry—

75. From the rent altitudes, the towers, and battlements, on  
high

And ancient crags crash'd down the heights, and lo  
each breaking wave



- Scream'd in his triumph round a crag, and bounded  
o'er its grave !  
The Giant shook with wrath, the trees, uprooted,  
hurl'd in space,  
A hail of monster spears were shot adown the moun-  
tain face ;  
25. Against the precipice on high the wildest breakers  
hurl'd,  
And round a whirlpool's circling deeps the broken  
waters swirl'd—  
And who can tell the lightning's glare, recount the  
thunder's roar,  
Or the fierce shrieks that through the gloom the  
vengeful cyclones bore ?

- 
- How long the tempests swept the bay, how long we  
fought for life,  
25 How long among the lodges mourn'd the aged, child,  
and wife ;  
How long before we saw the smoke of camp fires far  
away,  
Just where the Kaministiquia is emptied in the bay ;  
How long we slept and wearied lay restored to home  
at last—  
We could not tell, but heard the squaws relate four  
days were past.  
30. Since they had seen the tempest rage about the Giant's  
bed,  
And saw the seas contend with heaven, and mourned  
their braves for dead.

Full many suns were set behind the darksome western  
height,  
And still the tempest roar'd by day, and lightning  
glared by night ;  
And still these dark cliffs answer'd loud the thunders  
from the bay ;

95. The forests dared not sleep by night, the beasts were  
dumb by day !

We pray'd that Manitou should aid the strangers to  
escape—

'Twas then we named this "Thunder Bay," the moun-  
tain "Thunder Cape,"

At last the shades of evening crept across the mighty  
sea,

When all the waters slept at last, the cloud-chained sky  
was free ;

100. And all the great blue vault on high was echoed in the  
deep,

And floating in two azure skies the mountains lay  
asleep ;

Then as the waning sunlight flushed the crested cliffs  
on high

There came to us a lone canoe across the nether sky.  
It came not urged by by sail or blade, but as a mother's  
breast

105. The bearing waters nestled it and laid it in its rest.

The little ripples at the sides laughed in their heedless  
play,

And in that cradle of the sea a dying warrior lay.

We laid him down beside the tent, and death shades  
like the night

Upon his face were chased away by the red sunset  
light.

110. His dim eyes opened and he spoke, but in the voice  
was told

The fever spirit dwelt within ; in each stern feature's  
mould

We saw that youth was changed to age since on the  
mountain side

We ceased to find him in the gloom, and hope grew sick  
and died.

- "I see the thunder clouds stoop down, and with their  
lean hands grasp  
115 "And hurl abroad their lightning fires—the mad winds  
halt and gasp—  
"The hills are sweating in their fear—the weary Air is  
slain—  
"The very crags crouch down and hide upon the  
upper plain.  
"The storm is breaking—to the trees as hail are hurl'd  
in space—  
"And all the huge rocks glow with fire along the  
mountain face ;  
120. "From all the mountain mighty flames in fell contor-  
tion soar,  
"And through a whirling rain of fire unearthly  
cyclones roar !  
"In this great storm unaided man a thousand deaths  
had died—  
"Break Giant all this world to nought—Avenge—Thou  
art defied !  
"And thou inviolate Thunder hail, for Man has raped  
thy hold  
125. "Thy nest is desecrate at last—the mighty secret told—  
"He strikes ! And death is near—is come—Erect thy  
pride my friend—  
"Lay down the life but not the man, for death is *not*  
the End !  
"And he is dead—and I shall live to tell to all mankind  
"The vulture Death is slain by death, and deathless  
reigns the Mind.  
130. "But oh the price !—For he is gone—he who ha won  
the fight ;  
"He who alone had grasped the Truth from that abyss  
of night—  
"By fire, by fever, or in fight, by lightning, ice, or wave,  
"There never sank a braver man than to yon hero's  
grave."

A mightier hero still than he who on the mountain  
died

136. Lay by the Kaministiquia.

Now all the bars aside,

And mighty barriers of death were melted in the light  
That stream'd from out the Courts of Heaven o'er all  
the realms of Night—

The kingdom of the Life to Come reigned once o'er  
earthly sin,

For sunset opens wide the gates to let the dead come in,

140. The Land of the Hereafter lay before our straining eyes.

And amethystine glories flashed across the amber skies ;

And in that light the Hero lay, and closed his eyes and  
slept—

The silver mists upon his brow their tears of parting  
wept—

So all the air was filled with light, and all the earth  
with rest

145. As that brave Spirit took the trail that leads towards  
the West.



# THE PRAIRIE.



## "THE LEAN MAN"

FROM THE TORONTO WORLD OF 5TH NOV., 1887.

### CHAPTER I.

WHEN "The Lean Man" entered his lodge a nightfall, and saw his young squaw adorning her cheeks with vermillion, and braiding her straight black hair in tails after the enlightened manner of the Palefaces; when she had made him a robe for his comfort at night of the skins of over 200 rabbits; when she welcomed him at the door of his tent with good things earned or stolen from the white men: no wonder that the young husband felt that the Great Spirit had been good to him in giving "medicine" to ward off evil times, and to provide for his modest wants during the long winters.

He didn't say much about it, however; but, relieved of a great anxiety after the risky perpetration of early marriage, settled down to a life of honorable theft and genteel idleness, leaving "Turkey Legs" to manage his worldly affairs in the



shape of a daily meal, which that lady never failed to produce in good season.

"The Lean Man" used to spend much of his time in admiring his red blanket, for which he had wisely traded something that did not belong to him; and in meditating upon the obtuseness of the "Shermogonish" in arresting "the party of the second part" in that transaction instead of himself. For that ingenuous youth, "The-Man-Who-Bites-His-Nails," had been arrested on the information of the Indian agent at "Big Child's" reserve; and was now in the guard room at the barracks, and like to be tried for larceny. Our friend was a Sioux; and had come from Montana to the far Saskatchewan after an escapade on the part of his tribe that did not meet with the approval of the United States authorities. This was the glorious victory of "Sitting Bull" over "The Sun Child," Gen. Custer, who, with some four hundred American soldiers, had been slain in a coulee by only about 1400 Sioux. They had then come to the land of the Great Mother, where the white Okemow told them, to their great surprise, that their conduct was wicked and disreputable; though, even after the usual largesse of tea and tobacco, they still retain-

ed some scepticism about the peculiar views of the white men. Gradually this little band had drifted to the Saskatchewan; and, providing the Great Mother didn't bother them about reserves and treaty—even with the loss of flour and other emoluments—they were fairly content. True, it was a great shame that they couldn't get "treaty payments" like the Crees, without being corralled on a reserve; but they were better off than when badgered and hunted in the south because of their natural proclivities for lifting the wandering cattle on the prairie, such as they had eaten from time immemorial, and which were their rightful prey.

And even if these poor wanderers could not overthrow the hosts of Pharaoh, as they had tried to do last year, they could at least have the satisfaction of spoiling individual Egyptians, and so gain a precarious but honest livelihood in default of larger game.

And so it was that our hero went out to take the air one fine summer morning, and walked down the main trail on the river bank with his blanket held about him with inimitable grace, while he fanned himself with the bedraggled old wing of a crane in great peace and dignity. For in truth it

was a hot day, and the sun burned down on the dusty road. He wore his great hat, the abandoned top-hat of a departed Jesuit missionary, from which he had cut the crown, and after cutting battlements from the raw edge, adorned it with a feather and three brass nails. His leggings were of embroidered bead work, beautifully designed by his squaw. He had also well-fitting moccasins and a pipe-tomahawk. Altogether, despite that he felt it was foolish to expose himself to such a hot sun, he was delighted to feel that he looked his best, and that his new "fire bag" showed to perfection. He saw a white man cursing a team in one of the adjoining fields, and felt that his Race was able to look with superior calmness upon the irritable and too talkative whites.


But as he strode leisurely down the trail and was nearing the Hudson Bay Company's Post, he saw a cloud of dust beyond and the glitter of helmets above it. "By the Great Horn Spoon of the Pale-faces," he soliloquised, "here come the Shermogonish," and he went and hid himself. When "The Lean Man" had effaced himself he continued to gaze at the approaching horsemen from a secluded corner. And presently there came up the trail a

gallant troop of Mounted Police, their accoutrements and scarlet tunics, their white helmets and rifles across the saddle, resplendent in the sunlight. First came videttes, then twenty mounted men, followed by the rumbling transport. The waggons, loaded with provisions and bedding, carried each three men; and, at the trot, sent clouds of dust to leeward. Then came the rear guard of mounted men; and the commanding officer, the sergeant-major, and the bugler rode beside them. It was a stirring sight to see these splendid horses, the hardy sensitive bronchos of Alberta with their sun-burnt young riders; and all the eclat of military usage, and all the power of good rule over the vast land-oceans of the far west.


The Indian followed the party with wistful eyes; these proud careless masters of the plains—these robbers of his people's heritage, who had driven away the buffalo, and sent disease among the tribes, to slowly blight his kindred until they were all dead.

And they went on through the Mission, and out on the rolling prairie beyond, to patrol the country that had last year been the seat of war—when the restless wandering peoples had made

one last useless stand against the tide that was overwhelming them. Their leader, Louis Riel, who had seemed their only friend, had turned out but a self-seeking adventurer, and a traitor to them ; and now he was dead, and the whites were more powerful than ever.




But "The Lean Man" was not a politician or a sociologist, but only a poor Sioux, who, not knowing the meaning of events, was moderately happy. He went to the barracks, where he knew that the troop, having broken up camp, must have left many treasures in the shape of brass buttons, scarlet cloth and old boot-legs, among the refuse. But by the time he arrived at the barracks the camp had been cleared by a fatigue party, and he had to resort to the ash heaps. He was not challenged, save by a half-kindly, half-disdainful, "A wuss nitchie—get away out of this," from the cook ; and in the evening he returned homewards laden with spoil. Now it happened that Const. Anstaye, being on pass that evening, was proceeding up town to see Her, when he remembered that his washing was not contracted for. He therefore turned into a tepee by the wayside and sat down. He knew four words of the language, and pronounced two of these wrong ; but had little diffi-



culty in making himself understood, and presently left the tent. So "The Lean Man" saw from the distance a young soldier coming out of his tent, and with his boots flashing in the sunlight, his forage cap balanced on the traditional three hairs, and his white gauntlets and switch and other finery, proceed gaily towards the Mission. Then "The Lean Man's" heart was filled with bad! When he came to the tent he disregarded the vacuous broad smiles of welcome that greeted him, and said to himself that these were full of guile (although they certainly did not look it,) and he sat on the robes and sulked.

Later in the evening he crossed the river to where a bright fire burned amid the tents under the pine trees; and the usual pow-wow made the evening hideous, and continued with the gayest of howling and the most festive treatment of the tom-tom until a late hour. But there were speeches besides the music that night: the young Ghief "Four Sky" made an oration, in which he said he would go to Carrot River—to the land of rabbits, and stray cattle, and hen roosts, and settlers, and every other kind of game—to the land of good water, and lots of fish, and all kinds of idleness. Then "The Lean

Man" made a long and very stupid speech in which he said he would go too. Upon which the ancient and venerable big Chief "Stick-in-the-Mud," aided and abetted by "Resting Bird," the mother of "The Lean Man," made deprecations, and platitudes, and objections—all of which were overruled by the young men. "The Resting Bird," a few days after, retired in great gloom to a meadow some six miles up the river, with her brave and some other fogies.



Upon the morrow "Four Sky," with "The Lean Man," "Little Egg" with his son "Would not-go-out," "Wandering Mule" and "Sat On," with their horses, their squaws, their dogs, their children, their dignity, and all that they had, went down to Carrot River to sojourn.

A short time afterwards "Would not-go-out," the son of "Little Egg," was returning from an unsuccessful hunt after a lost *cayuse*, when he was overtaken by a settler driving an empty waggon, and asked for a lift. The white man grumbled out a surly refusal, which so far incensed the lad that he climbed up into the waggon from behind, and carried out the traditions of his name by refusing to climb out again. Thereupon the settler, greatly to the annoyance of his passenger, lashed out be-

hind with the whip, and "Would-not-go-out" became very angry, and pointed his "shooting stick" at the enemy. Happening to remember that the old flintlock gun was not loaded, he relented, and proceeded to have satisfaction with a threat. He told the white man that he wouldn't trouble to kill him now. "Because we are going to kill all you whites in a few days anyhow." Having delivered himself of this very silly remark, and perceiving that he was now close to the tents, he jumped out of the waggon and walked home. But the settler went about with information "on the very best authority" that there was to be a general massacre of the whole settlement, and so much alarmed were the neighbors that a deputation was sent to beg for a detachment of Police.

The little group of lodges were placed among the aspens by a lake, in a sheltered, shadowy hollow in the plain. The wide rolling prairie whose yellow grass, starred with flowers, melted towards the greys and softest azures that lay against the sky; the beautiful still waters where the young ducks swam; the delicate shimmering poplars; the smoke shaded lodges, and ponies grazing in the meadow—this was the lovely scene where the Red Men



dwelt the happy abundant plain that the Good Spirit had given them.

In due course there came to the settlement a sergeant and four constables of the Mounted Police, bringing with them a tent or two in the waggon, and a general impression that they had come to stay. The people had seldom had the soldiers among them, and there was some idea among the women that they were queer animals with red coats and bad habits. The "Riders of the Plains," however, used, even as recently as that, to travel like bandits, often indeed being mistaken for horse-thieves; and soon won the hearts of the good wives by their liberal purchase of milk, eggs, and butter, by their quiet good humor and tendency towards a chat. To any one tired of the prosaic life of the cities of the East the very sight of these men would have been refreshment. Picturesque, liberal, unconventional, often highly educated, the Shermogonish have no flavor of the old tiresome life of the umbrella and the table-cloth, and I wish no man a better medicine than their company. Of course an early and rigorous examination was made into the causes that had given rise to such uneasiness among the people. Sergeant Monmouth

had a chat with "Four Sky," whose people were found busy skinning rabbits; but there was some delay in producing the settler who had raised the alarm, he having gone to Fort a la Corne, from whence he could not be expected for a day or two. In the meantime nothing could be done, and there was no pressing necessity for action because everything was quiet.

Upon the third day some of the police were sitting in the little general store having a comfortable growl for want of something better to do. Steen having lit a very bad cigar, sat down on a barrel and with his broad slouch hat jammed down on the back of his head, opened a discussion.

"Oh! it's all right," he said in reply to a general observation on the part of the storekeeper concerning the state of the country. "It's all right, if it warnt for them miserable 'nitchies'—who are no use anyhow—running the whole 'shebang' with their confounded monkey business. 'Sif thar wasn't enough drills and fatigues to keep the whole darned outfit on the keen jump without their fooling around the country stealing horses, and killing cattle, and raising rackets from one

year's end to another; and now there's that damn fool Garnett robbing the mails, and he'll give enough trouble by the time he's hanged to keep half the troop busy hunting him. I——" He was interrupted by Sergt. Monmouth; "Look here, I'll bet anyone a month's pay that there'll be a mounted escort for every mail in the country within this month—you jest see if there ain't!"

Constable Mercer took up the growl at this point, and made out a very bad case against the Canadian Government "for running a poor——of a buck policeman 'sif he was a nigger or suthin' worse."

Here Le Soeur broke in: "There was——wot you say—General Ordaire? Yes, General Ordaire, jest befor' we come away——er——"

Sergt. Monmouth: "O, give us a rest, 'nitchie"—go away back to your reserve, man!"

At this moment Constable Anstaye burst into the store with a joke that could not be kept back a minute, but in a sad dilemma that he had not breath to tell it. The substance of his tale was gathered in the course of a few minutes, and was to the effect that he had been in one of the tepees

talking to a squaw when a "nitchie" came in, and, when he saw him, looked as black as thunder and went out. Presently he heard a racket outside, and found the same Indian unmercifully thrashing a boy; but he was interrupted by "Four Sky" and another, who dragged him off and looked about as cheerful as a blizzard on a cold day.

"But which 'tepee' were you in—and what were you up to?"

"Oh, I dunno, it was the one next the trail, and the chap that raised the row was that lanky young cuss in a red blanket, and a top hat with the crown out."

Monmouth strolled down to the camp, but on his return said that everything was quiet enough there. No further notice was taken of the affair, and the next day it was forgotten; but Anstaye noticed that whenever he went down to the camp the Indian with the red blanket scowled upon him.

In course of time the man Brown, who had raised the alarm, returned from Fort a la Corne; and was taken by Sergt. Monmouth to the Indian camp. He felt uncomfortable about the result of his assertions; and being a mean man determined

that instead of an open confession that he had been needlessly scared, he would justify himself at all costs. Unfortunately it happened that "Would-not-go-out" was absent; and when all the braves in the little band were brought before him, and he was asked to produce the bloodthirsty savage who had, as he said, attempted to murder him, the white man hesitated, and tried to excuse himself, and make light of it all in the most generous manner, saying that he would be very sorry to get the poor fellow into trouble.

"Come on—no fooling!" said Monmouth. Brown asked in Sioux whether all the band were there: and the Chief replied that they were all there except a lad who was not even full grown, and could scare nobody with any spirit.

Monmouth: "Well, which was it?"

Brown: "Oh, I don't want to get a poor miserable nitchie in jail!"

Monmouth: "Well you're a pretty specimen, having us sent pretty near 200 miles to take the man who was going to kill you. You say that he attempted murder—by Jove, I'll arrest you if you don't take care, for trying to screen a murderer!"

Brown was now thoroughly cowed, and felt that he must do a dirty crime to save himself from public contempt. Pointing to a tall, surly-looking young man in a red blanket he said : "That one."

Monmouth asked the Chief what character the accused bore ; and the reply was sorrowfully expressed that of late the evil spirit had been upon "The Lean Man," for only two days ago he had wantonly attacked and thrashed a lad in camp, named "Would-not-go-out," for no cause.

And so it came about that the detachment returned to Headquarters, and carried away "The Lean Man" a prisoner.

## CHAPTER II.

It was a pleasant sight to see a party of Mounted Police ride in from some command, bronzed, dusty and travel-stained, their harness rusted with the rough usages of the camp, their eyes bright with the reflected breath and freedom of the plains, while the horses pricked their ears to hear the whinny of a colt in the corral, as they foresaw the quietude of the dim stables, or the sunny upland where the herd was grazing. Thus came home the party from Carrot River, and drew up sharp before the Guard House. The prisoner was sent into his allotted cell, the waggon unloaded at the Quartermaster's Store, the horses led to water, the bedding taken to the barrack rooms, the cook urged to be ready with the provisions. The arrivals shed their prairie dress, while a rapid discussion took place on the current news; and a Guard was told off, and having got into uniform its members made their way to the Guard House, growling not a little that a single prisoner should cause so much extra work. Until then the picquet, had gone on solitary night rounds with his lantern, and dozed

away the spare hours in the Guard Room: but this was only a pleasant reminiscence now. But the Indian, the restless unthinking child of the plains, had come to the weariness of an imprisoned spirit, and sank into the heavy lethargy of despair. The log walls of his prison, the iron bars of the door, the soldier sitting at the little table beyond, and what might he seen through a loop-hole in the wall, were now exchanged for the glorious horizon, with all the sweet sounds and sights of nature that people the broad tent of day. That loop-hole, pierced during the war, was now his only consolation, and he would sit for hours before it looking out upon the world. The sadness of his spirit seemed to weigh the atmosphere, for the air was dense for days with the smoke of prairie fires; and once at night he saw the sharp lines of flames coming down over the hills into the river flat, and hoped against hope that these would come down to release him.

"The Lean Man" was examined by the officer in command, but he was found so sullen and intractable that no evidence of his innocence could be come at: so he was committed for trial. One thing that he said to the interpreter was beyond



the man's powers of translation, but was several times repeated among the men on the detachment in the words in which it was rendered: "The Good Spirit gave me the prairie for a bed, the trees to shelter me—but you Shermogonish have given me cold boards." And afterwards he said to Sergeant Monmouth, "You are going to kill me because I fought against you; be quick—kill me now—I am tired of waiting to die." He thought of the past—when he had gone through the tortures of the Sun Dance to come forth from the ordeal a warrior; he thought of all the excitement of the war, how he had seen the red flames of Fort Carlton leap up against the night, and had fought in the rifle pits of Batoche under Gabriel Dumont; he thought of his short happy married life before the dark cloud settled down upon him; and he brooded over what the Interpreter had said to him: "You will be tried next month."

Weeks passed outside the Guard House; and Change sat as usual on the wings of Time. The Mission people had ever since the war been as prompt in the matter of alarms as a fire brigade; and the Carrot River "scare," added to contemporary fictions about the Indians, had caused a general feeling of alarm. This was by no means mitigated

by the departure of the Troop for the south by forced marches, to meet a great dignitary in the neighborhood of Long Lake ; and by the rumored outbreak of an Indian war at Wood Mountain.

The band of "Four Sky" returned from Carrot River bringing the bereaved "Turkey Legs," who would sit for hours on the ground outside of the Guard House waiting for a casual glimpse of her lord ; and comforted him much by her silent sympathy.

In due course the great dignitary returned to the East ; and the Troop came home again, to the infinite regret of the little garrison, who by no means yearned for drill and discipline. The summer was ended, the harvest was gathered in, the winter began to send forth scouts to feel the way, and the full ripe year was waning to its close. And still "The Lean Man" knelt at the loop-hole, or made his little daily excuses for access to the free air of heaven. He lay through the long nights wondering what would be done to him after the trial, and feeling in his numbed sensibilities only the one terror—Disgrace. And he said within his heart, and whispered it to himself, and heard the winds whisper the words at night : "I will not be tried."

Three days after he arrived at this determination some of the men were spending a spare hour in the large barrack room engaged in "bed fatigue," and between the whiffs of a quiet smoke carrying on a desultory conversation. Burk, who was on guard that day, a tall, handsome, good-natured Englishman, sat on the edge of his bed fumbling in a kit-bag underneath for some tobacco, having permission to leave the Guard House for a few minutes.

"Well, Geometry," said Anstaye, "has the Nitchie been up to any of his games to-day?"

Burk: "I should just think he was! Why, I was just taking him over to the kitchen for the guard dinner at noon, when he made a break and got clean away past the Hospital."

Sergeant Monmouth: "Well, I hope you shot the—"

"Oh, it was no use shooting him; I just hol-lared out to the others and skinned after him."

"That is, you made use of your compasses, Geometry?"

"Oh shut up, Tribulation," said Burk; "Well, I

caught up close to the Riding School and nabbed him. And then I ran him off to the kitchen and made him lay hold of the big tea pot without any more fooling."

"And did he buck?"

"I saw buck! No, you bet he was as quiet as—as—er—death. That's the third bolt he's made to-day; he must have a pretty bad conscience."

Indeed, "The Lean Man" had made several attempts to escape, but his escorts had each time seized him, and taken no extra precautions other than to show him the butt of a revolver or set forth some counsel. That evening, however, before he was sent with an escort for the supper, he was shackled with a "ball and chain," an instrument intended to restrain the most volatile of captives should he become too retiring. It must not be imagined that the prisoner was treated harshly, for if there is one virtue possessed by the rough soldiery of the prairies, it is their invariable kindness to the criminals committed to their charge.

"The Lean Man," thwarted in his attempts to escape, brought to the humiliation of chains, and filled with the darkest forebodings of evil, came to

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The Indian sat long brooding in the intense stillness. Through the barred aperture in the door a stream of golden light poured into the cell; and under the lamp in the Guard Room the Sergeant of the Guard sat at the table writing. The two men off duty lay asleep on the sloping dais at the other side of the room, still in complete uniform, and wearing their heavy side-arms as they took their brief, uneasy hours of rest. There was no sound save their breathing, and the steady scratching of the Sergeant's pen, as he proceeded with his letters. Presently the "picket" came in for the stable keys, saying that "the buckskin mare and Bulkley's horse broke loose in the long stable—I can manage all right." Then he went out, and the prisoner watched him through the loophole as he went swinging his lantern towards the "corralls."

"The Lean Man" slowly unbound the sash from his waist, and knotted the ends together—he thrust the knot through the loop-hole—he drew the sash sharply back, catching the knot against the sides of a narrow gap between two logs—he pulled hard to make sure that the knot would hold. Then he sat a few moments in silence, and covered his face with his hands. He looked about

him—the Sergeant of the Guard had taken a book and lay on the trestle bed beside his table reading, and the night around was infinitely still. Holding the loop of the sash the prisoner looked up towards heaven and prayed; then he placed his head within the loop and crouched down, leaning heavily with his throat against the sash. The Sergeant of the Guard was still reading—the two men were breathing quietly in their sleep—the “picquet” came out from the stables and went and stood on the bank of the river near by—the mist lay over the valley, and all was still.

The cold autumn day broke upon the world, and reveillé echoed from the wooded sides of the little valley, and rang melodiously against the banks of the broad river; the sun rose triumphant over the mists, and the waters were resplendant before his slanting rays—but the Indian had gone to the place of his fathers, and his sad stern eyes were closed forever in sleep. This man had dared the long agonies of torture in utter silence, had crushed with determined hands the life within him, and had gone down to the grave triumphant, without one sound to tell the watchful soldier, who was actually in the same room with him, that

the last tragedy was being transacted in a lingering anguish of suffocation.

They buried him on the bank of the river, and one of the soldiers made two laths into a cross during an idle moment and set it over the grave. The Indian lay under the prairie flowers in the shadow of the cross ; on the one side of him Humanity rattled down the long dusty trail, and on the other lay the still expanses of silver, the broad, silent waters of the great Saskatchewan.



## A NIGHT HALT.

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FROM "CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL."

**T**HE Canadian North-West is not peopled with very savage races, nor is it wholly unexplored, like some parts of the Empire; there are villages every two hundred miles or so, and trails between them good or bad according to season. There are wide tracts where the houses are in sight of each other; and all over the plains the survey-marks and buffalo bones lie together. Sometimes the trail for many days' march is over plains level as the sea, or rolling land verdureless and stony; sometimes the country is like a stormy ocean, with all the hollows planted with shrubby bushes, or filled with stagnant water, with meagre reeds and alkaline deposits. Large areas are covered with hills; but rarely, and as a great treat, one encounters running-water in a deep ravine.

A stream called Eagle Creek has cut a ravine some two hundred feet deep in a stony plain near the North Saskatchewan, and carved the banks into a medley of grotesque and isolated mounds.

strewn with boulders, and nearly void of grass, whose steep and eccentric shapes give the view from the bottom a most singular and impressive contour. The stream itself has evaporated, and left one or two miry ponds, whose stagnant waters feed the few and small shrubs that adorn the bottom ; and beside them is a space of half an acre of pleasant grass, with many round patches in it, traces of fire beside which passengers on that lonely way have been wont to rest. How waggons get down the trail to the bottom is marvellous.

The sun has set behind the hills towards the west ; the wind is sinking ; the foxes are running about, and a crane stands in the untroubled water and looks melancholy. A cloud of dust behind the hills to the east, and the distant tramp of horses, announce that the valley will presently be disturbed ; and immediately, a mounted man in a bright cavalry uniform rides to the edge of the hills, and stands out against the sky, a beautiful silhouette, motionless as a statue. Then two and two, come twenty mounted men, each with a rifle poised on the horn of his Mexican saddle, and many a glittering point of brass and steel about his harness. At the word of command they dis-

mount ; and advance, leading their horses down the slope ; and we see behind them five waggons each carrying two men, and a rearguard of two, who linger behind a bit before they dismount and follow the groaning transport. They are coming nearer now—young, bronzed, and sturdy, their equipment suited to the prairie, but very strange to those who live in cities. One or two wear cavalry breeches, with broad yellow stripes down the sides ; but most of them are dressed in dark canvas adorned with brass buttons ; and there is a large variety of slouch-hats, and western shirts, and old red jackets, according to the pleasure of the wearers. All wear riding-boots, spurs, cartridge belts heavily mounted, and big revolvers, with lanyards buckled to the butts and passing over one shoulder.

When they reach the level land at the bottom of the ravine, the mounted men form up in line, and the waggons draw up behind them forty feet apart ; a rope is stretched along the line of waggons ; and, leaving the saddles on the first line, the horses are attached to the rope almost as soon as the teams are unharnessed. Two or three men select a spot by the bushes, where an iron bar is quickly set on uprights five feet apart ; and, before

the sound of the axes has ceased in the bush, three heavy camp-kettles are swinging over a roaring fire. A bell tent is pitched for the officer in command; the horses are watered, groomed, and fed; and at a last merry order from the bugle, there is a general dash for plates and cups; and knives drawn from belts and boot-legs are ready for an astonishing slaughter of pork and hard-tack. The latter is the western name for that which is known elsewhere as ship-biscuit, and it is partaken in company with strong and hot tea around the camp-fire. The meal is accompanied by an uplifting of blue smoke into the clear sky; and there is a lively fire of chaff in good American and even British dialects. After a decent interval, the horses are hobbled or picketed for the night, and a guard of three men placed on picket duty until sunrise. Blankets are spread out along the saddle-line, and in and under the waggons; and before the sounding of the last of three beautiful evening "calls" has awakened the echoes of the sterile hills, conversation has flagged, and there is silence under the starlight.

The horses are pulling at the grass, raving about, and clanking their hobbles; and the man on duty stands by the fire or glides about among

them ; and overhead the stars are blazing in heaven, and the dim white aurora is flitting in the north. Then the stars and the aurora pale, and the north-east glows with rose and orange, and the wind wakes up, and the soft mists rise. Startling all the echoes, making the keen air tremble, waking the summer world, and losing coherence in the distant sky, reveillé rings out clear and sharp, a burst of triumphant unexpected music—and the night is gone. Then to successive bugle calls, blankets are rolled, waggons loaded, the horses carefully tended, and breakfast finished ; and ere the sunlight warms the ravine, the mounted party is toiling up the hillside, and the waggons are following across the narrow bottom.

Such is a night-halt of a party of Mounted Police under the pleasantest conditions, and while travelling at about forty miles a day. But there are no members of the Force of over a few months' standing who have not travelled *without* night-halts, or under conditions of hardship that it would be difficult for the reader to realise. Although the statement little accords with those of emigration agents, the climate of many districts is extremely rigorous ; and although this does not detract from

the value of the crops, the cold is so great in December and January that even an emigration agent would not willingly travel during those months in any part of the Territories. As pioneers preparing for the advance of civilization, the Mounted Police undertake to suffer discomfort and to perform duties of unexampled difficulty, without the performance of which the new provinces of the western plains must be, as they were before the white men came-- a howling wilderness.

## D'ANQUERA.

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THE story is about the Prairies, vast, varied, filled with the melodies of the winds, scented with wildernesses of roses; and the time is the summer of 1884, a year before those months of blood and fire crowded with the events of Riel's Second Rebellion.

Constable Carlo d'Anquera, whom we all called Tough'un, because he didn't like it, was a Mexican of noble blood, educated in France, and now wandering in North America. He could speak both French and English almost as well as his native tongue, had sworn allegiance to Her Majesty of Britain, and was now travelling over the Plains in her service on a little self-willed bay broncho. He wore an old red coat, with brass buttons, embossed with the head of a buffalo and "N. W. M. P.," meaning North West Mounted Police; his legs were encased in great and heavy *chaparjos* (commonly know as "chaps") of reddish leather with long fringes; he wore a mighty cartridge belt, with a revolver in the holster a foot

long; and a grey slouch hat looped up with a silver brooch and adorned with a dainty wild rose. But in all his formidable attire there was no mistaking the merry black eyes, weapons—bright weapons for the heart alone, and reputed to have done great execution at times. He was not handsome but for those eyes; but who can speak ill of a man with such a neat figure, such an honest sun-burnt face, and such a gay reckless laugh as used to disarm all criticism of the person of Carlo d'Anquera. The broncho went on as slowly as he dared, grabbing furtively at some tuft of grass with his ears set back and his eyes on the watch, pretending to a stumble into a gopher hole, or whisking his "banged" tail at the flies as far as the mutilation of that member would permit. And the Plain extended forever and ever, bright with prairie flowers, and blessed with the sweet breathing of the wind in the burning noon-time.

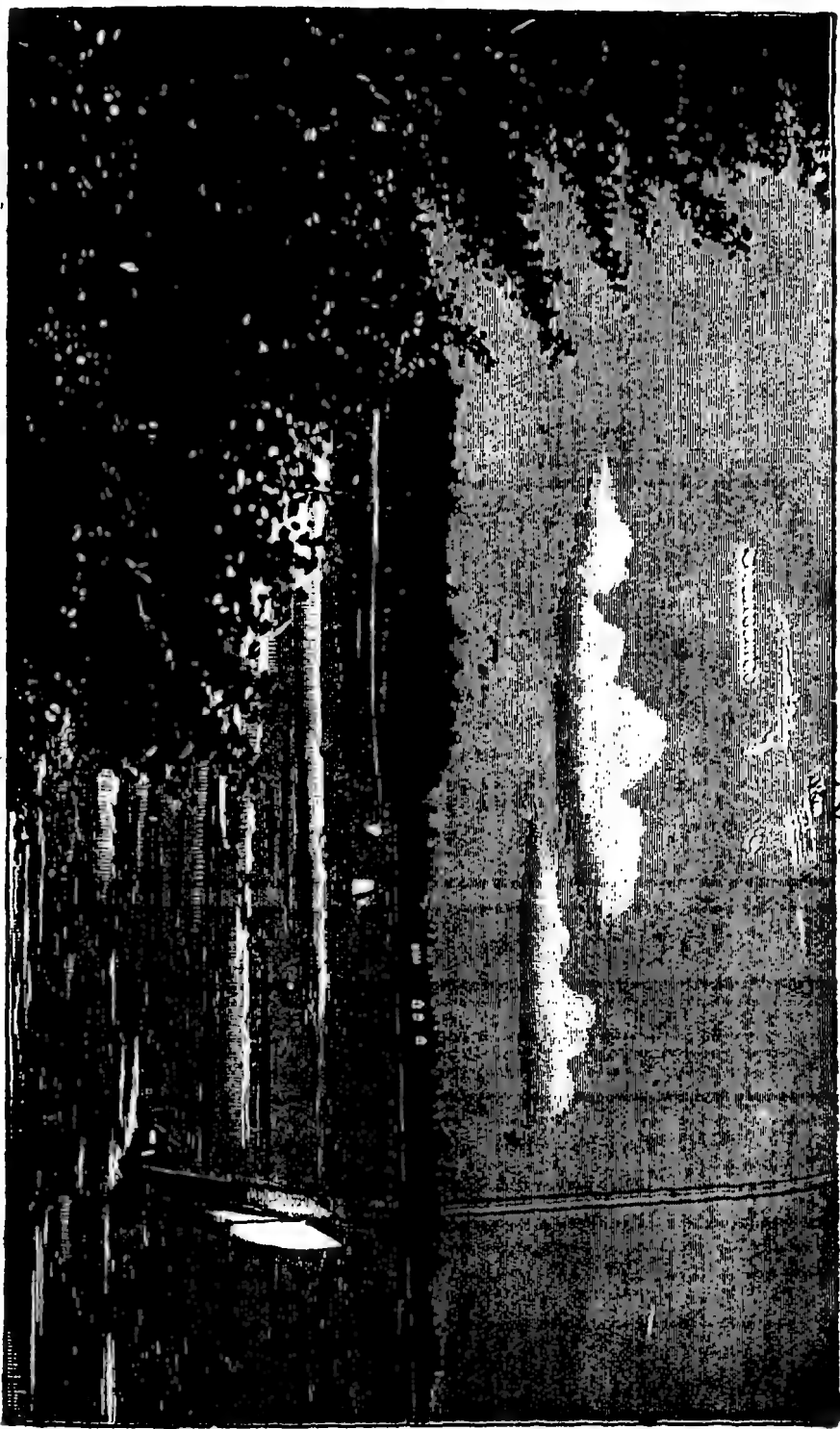
Presently, at an unusually venturous effort after grass on the part of the broncho, and much to the disgust of the latter, his rider straightened his back, glanced at his watch, and cast certain tender thoughts to the wind; then the spurs came home in a tender spot, and betaking himself to



business with a wistful glance at the pasture as a farewell, the horse fell into a pleasant lope, swift, easy and sustained, that carried him far in the direction of stables. And if anyone wants to see the world's Master as his best let him watch this young gentleman sweep by, with the long fringes waving, and the great-rowelled spurs ringing out their sharp notes, and the soft white hand commanding the horse, and the great dark eyes commanding the plains.

Sunset found him at a log building with a few outhouses; and, having stabled and tended the broncho, he entered the building.

Coon was there, and McMurrich; and Black bent over the frying-pan skillfully burning some slap-jacks; and all greeted d'Anquera, and asked him what brought him into this particular district. He told them that he had been transferred to that troop to which they belonged, and after a week or two in the Post he had been sent with a despatch to the Coon, with orders to continue with the detachment, while his baggage was to be sent on in the next ration waggon. So he formally reported to Coon, who was the Corporal in charge; and, while the despatch was opened by the latter,



A PEABODY LANE.

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went out to his saddle to get some things out of the wallets for one of the party. On his return he found the rest all gathered about Coon, who was giving instructions in his usual quiet tone as he continued to read the despatch.

"Well, you fellows, the 'soft snap's' over at last. Black—Picquet eight to eleven, McMurrich—Picquet—relieve Black and wake me at four, I'll take the rest of the night myself."

"Why, what's up?"

"Talk about what's up when we're out of ear-shot of these 'civvies.' Look here, you fellows, I advise you all to turn in sharp at eight, for we may start off before daylight. Picquet will have to keep a sharp lookout for old Steve the Scout, for he ought to be here from Little Bluffs any time between this and to-morrow. When he arrives we are off to the B——Hills, with a week's rations. Come and let's see that we have everything ready while Black gets the supper."

Everything being ready for the march, next morning as far as the greasing of axles and gathering up and storing of heavy baggage was concerned, the men came in to supper, the old settler and his

wife listening in vain for any information as to what the stir was about. Nor could any satisfaction be had from Soon either during the supper or the short smoke afterwards; and the horses were duly attended to, the picquet posted to guard the horses, and the bedding unrolled for the night, without the host or hostess learning anything beyond the fact that their boarders were going away on duty next morning, and the rich gleanings from the Government harvest would be theirs no more.

The Scout arrived very early the next morning; and about two hours after the whole party was on the march, bound for the defiles of the hill country near by, where a desperate band of outlaws were to be discovered and arrested in the interests of Justice.

The Tough'un had naturally much to tell his comrades concerning the Troop, and the Force to which they belonged; of sicknesses of men and horses, promotions, punishments, expeditions, and a hundred other scraps of news welcome to a party that for some weeks had been isolated on the frontier. The old Scout rode along growling and sleepy after his ride of two hundred miles to join the party, and prophesied all sorts of bad luck to an expedition

that left no time for a decent sleep ; and swore blue streaks when the ' boys ' began chaffing him, and was not comforted until the day after when he found a good listener in the person of d'Anquera to his long and often tedious narratives of past adventure, and the never failing topic of the virtue and grace of his adopted daughter Annette, the joy and pride of his old heart. He spoke sorrowfully of how he had barely time to kiss her and tell her why he was going away at the moment of departure from Little Bluffs, and she had turned deadly pale at the thought of his going after such a desperate gang of horse thieves. So were they conversing while following a tortuous track that led up a stony coulee ; and the keen eyes of old Steve were the first to descry a figure on horseback beckoning from the hills above them. The rider was coming down the steep and dangerous side of the coulee as the party halted to observe what happened, and Steve cried out " Why eet ees my niece, my niece Annette, What for my Annette come here ? Annette ! " and he began to cry out in French until, clearing the stream at the bottom with a bound, a young woman rode gaily laughing to his side, her dark face all aglow with excitement, and her long black hair streaming in the wind.

Nor did Annette appear to consider it a very odd thing that she should ride all the way from Little Bluffs alone to look after her old uncle; and she drew some stale cakes from her wallets for him, and said gaily that she was come to nurse him and to ride with the Police. Surprise gave way to admiration when the 'boys' saw how she rode, and how with perfect modesty and the most innocent air in the world she would enter trustingly into their rude company, never thinking even of asking assent, but simply taking everything for granted. Her unbounded confidence in them stirred up every spark of latent chivalry; and, though they fell in love with her to a man, they did so as respectfully and fearfully as a true man should. But it was the young Mexican with his gay prairie dress, and his French, and his old time courtesy that won her heart; and she twisted him round her finger before supper. Once as they rode together that day by the side of some bush, d'Anquera thought that a dark swarthy face was looking at him from among the branches; and was going to find out about it, when she laughed at him for seeing ghosts, and made him feel so silly that he neglected his duty, and so missed the only chance that party ever got of arresting the notable horse-

thieves. How was it that as he lay under the lee of the trees that night, he awaked and raised his head from his saddle, and thought he heard a girl's voice pleading with a man called Mac in broken English, half sobs, half whispers? He fell asleep again wondering what it was; and next morning he said he had dreamed of a woman's voice pleading with a man, and all the 'boys' laughed at him.

What had Annette really joined the party for?

And so the search failed, and the outlaws went free, and the girl rode home with the Police and her old uncle, but more especially with d'Anquera to Little Bluffs. And the 'boys' let Annette fire off all their ammunition, and ride all their horses, and command the party; and not only could she ride and shoot better than they, but she could make herself charming in two languages, and cooked divinely. She was not pretty, she was not a lady, she was not neat, she showed strains of Indian blood; but she was a girl, and she could ride and shoot, and it certainly was a treat to see her shoot gophers.

When the other fellows saw her marked preference for the Tough'un, they very sensibly betook themselves to other topics, and contemplated



future love's promotions and drunks, the health and spirits of their horses, and the rustiness of their guns.

And so the party went by way of their former quarters at the settler's house, where they picked up the heavier baggage, to Little Bluffs; and reported by telegraph to Headquarters at Regina. In reply Coon received orders to remain with his party at Little Bluffs as a town detachment, to inspect passing trains on the Canadian Pacific line in search for illicit whiskey, and to rent a house and stable for quarters. Old Steve took his niece home, where she was soundly rated by her aunt for her wicked conduct in committing more iniquities, real and imaginary, than there are in the calendar. D'Anquera was placid, the rest hilarious; and when the 'boys' from their new detachment station, saw the Tough'un setting forth in perfect undress uniform to call on Mrs. Steve on the first of many occasions, they calculated to a nicety the effect on the young girl's mind of the glowing scarlet. If she loved him in prairie dress, she hardly knew it until she saw him in uniform; and what with the tinkle of his silvered spurs, and the accurate fit of his riding boots, and the poise

on three hairs of the daintiest of forage caps, she was fairly bewitched, eye and the old lady too.

After three short months the detachment was called in ; and d'Anquera declared that " the beastly Government never did let a chap have half a show anyhow, and as soon as they thought you were having a good time they would call you in to Headquarters just to see how you looked ' prairie pounding,' or shovelling coal, or bucking wood, or suthin," to all of which the detachment gloomily assented. And so they went out to pay farewell calls, and to see how much was owing at the saloons, and to have a quiet growl all to themselves on general principles. But although d'Anquera had been popping the question to himself by way of rehearsal, and had very nearly tumbled down a well one night while at the most momentous part of the performance ; and although he had stiffened his gauntlets with pipe-clay, and exceeded all legitimate credit in buying perfumes, not to mention gifts and propitiatory offerings to the old lady, he had never got to the point ; and left the place in an awful temper, and his little lover crying her heart out over a sock—the only relic she had of him.

Somehow during the longer months that fol-

lowed, the winter in barracks with the endless round of the "guard," "stables," "orderly," "fatigue," &c., of military routine, the Tough'un always managed to preserve an even temper, a perfect digestion, and a large correspondence. The winter was, however, broken for him by one spell of sunshine, which has seemed to him ever since a moral Chinook (that is the wind from the west, a smile of mud six hundred miles broad that illumines the grim face of the western winter.) He had showed me a ring with rubies and diamonds in it, got regardless of expense from Montreal; and shortly afterwards he came to me as I lay on my bed in the barrack room reading a novel, and asked me, "Which is it—YES, or NO?" He held a sealed letter in his hand, and I said "YES." He went away to the hay corral and read the letter, and it was "Yes." Then the Tough'un went off on a mysterious furlough, and was seen at Little Bluffs in a buckskin shirt. If one of the Little Bluffs girls had poisoned herself in a fit of jealousy about a ring nobody would have been surprised.

With the early days of March came news to us from the north; and on the 18th of the month we were all off to Fort Carlton on a forced march to try and prevent war, and reinforce our garrison in

the troubled district. So came the North-West Rebellion. From his dreams of love and house-keeping the Tough'un had to turn his attention to the stern realities of war; for days he was unwashed, for months his moustache had to growl about his face untended, but worst of all, communication was shut off, and there were no letters from Little Bluffs for seven weeks. Then, d'Anquera smeared soot on his face to keep off snow-blindness, and his duck clothes were covered with axle grease, and he lived on rancid bacon and broken hard tack. But none bore so well the varieties of freezing, starving, watching, and subsequent roasting, the sleepless vigilance, the tremendous marches, the incessant labour. When it was all over, and we returned to the world of letters and dry clothes, his boots were the first polished, and his letters the first posted. The first letters brought bad news for the Tough'un—another man professed the love and desired the hand of the future Mrs. Carlo d'Anquera. Unfortunately the newcomer had won Annette by the presentation of a rich gift two years before; and on the second and much more attractive admirer turning up, the young woman, knowing that rich gifts and hand-

some adorers were, not to be had every day, suppressed No. 1 and forgot all about him. This the artless child had been able to do because No. 1 had disappeared, and nobody seemed to know what had become of him ; and on her second engagement she would gladly have returned the gift of the recreant if he had been at hand. No. 1 was a "tough," supposed to be a very determined fellow and a dead shot, and had determined to have the "measly policeman's blood," as soon as he found out that the girl had fallen in love with his gift and the policeman's self. The Tough'un bought a revolver, and was seen practicing every day at a bottle, which he most viciously shot at and missed at great ranges. Moreover he applied for a "pass" and could not get one because his services were required, and he was not entitled to two in one year. Therefore, the Tough'un made thick the atmosphere with maledictions in three languages, and spent the whole summer abusing the benevolent Government, to its great danger. The girl's letters, unless intercepted by the "tough," who lit all his cigars with them, continued to pour forth unalterable affection for her betrothed ; and, except for an occasional ride in his buckboard, the profoundest dislike and contempt for the unfortunate

No. 1. D'Anquera continued to explain his sentiments to his family and his love to Annette until the year 1885 had spent his last 'quarter,' and set up the drinks before he lay down overcome with the mirth and punch of Christmas, to sleep through the night of ages, or until his services were required by another planet.

At last our hero succeeded in uncorking the paternal bottle, and pouring out for himself a generous bumper of the paternal wealth; and having after some little delay purchased his discharge from the Mounted Police, he set off, fashionably attired after the western taste, with the blessing of his brothers-in-arms, to demolish the "tough," and live happily ever after. And so Carlo d'Anquera set off down the long trail that leads to prosperity and earthly fatness, and Annette is his true wife.

As to the "tough": the Police wanted, with their usual impertinent curiosity, to know what he had been up to in B——Hills the previous summer; and Annette tells in her pretty broken English how glad she is that, with all her husband's tender enquiries, he was never able to discover as much as a hair or feather of the missing deperado.

# THE TRAILS.

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## AN ESSAY.

THE word Trail originates, I believe, from the resemblance between the path of western man and the track of wild beasts. A prairie trail in fact exactly resembles the track of a corkscrew. It was probably started by somebody benighted and lost, who went that way by mistake; and its continuance was due to that instinct of going where someone else has been that is so highly characteristic of the pioneer. The path thus formed is used by the winds as a dust bin, and in winter as a camping place for snowdrifts. As to the traffic, once in a long time a gopher may or may not cross the trail, but probably won't.

On the maps there are places in big letters every forty miles or so, presumably cities. But really they don't amount to much, the names being the most imposing part; vide: Hoodoo, Whoop-up, and Way-Back, on the trail to Bitter Creek. These places generally have a population of two, or if very populous, two and a boy.

Trails are of a malignant disposition, and do take an evil delight in climbing up steep hills sideways; and nothing is more hopelessly futile than the attempt of the pious freighter to climb up (with perhaps a parson in the rig) without blessing things generally. If there is rolling prairie the trail pursues a tortuous course, like a buggy with two wheels off, and with a view to finding all the steep pitches and inserting double barrelled, soul destroying, twists therein. The vehicles are also adapted to give effect to any snags, or young rocks and holes, that may be planted incidentally. It excites the profoundest emotions to see a bobsleigh with the horses tangled up on a side hill in winter, the sleigh trying to illustrate the manner of a tom cat on a snow covered roof that was half thawed and frozen. Picture to yourself the cat *a la* slide sideways, and the bobsleigh *a la* cat! But we are getting all diverted up.

So to return to the summer, bushes are placed where there is occasion for such hat removals and eye extinctions, as may be essential to the maintenance of friendly feelings amongst travellers. Western drivers as a rule pray earnestly when annoyed or bored. Bull waggoners are of a plaintive temperament; and their sorrows prey upon the



minds of the teamsters, and cause them to conjure up swears that put to shame the civilizations of the east.

Black flies, mosquitos, and bull-dogs form a crescendo, a positive, comparative, and superlative, a black-fly-flier-fliest of insect fiendishness. The motive power expressed in wagging horses tails on this account would drive all the locomotive engines in the Great Lone Land. We have a proposal on hand to utilize this great natural force; but it would have been better for the souls of poor prairie-pounding humanity, and for the morals of the beasts, had the said energy been stored up in the bowels of the world by Providence, just as the carbonic acid gas is stored as fuel in the coal measures. We would gladly mourn at the obsequies of insect life; but the delight of dancing on the graves of these three species of fiends transcends the human imagination.

Winter travelling is the driving of a bob sleigh or jumper, *i. e.* running behind; a friend of mine objected to this method of driving, saying that he would rather "freeze like a man than run behind like a dog." He got his wish.

The best function of the trails is to stop loco-

motion (of prairie fires) but they are also valued for the shipment of that which is illicit. Realizing their importance, our benevolent Government has recently sent plenipotentiaries to proclaim one of our most lengthy and conspicuous routes a public highway. Now this is not only highly complimentary, but absolutely flattering—to the trail.

Owing to their continued existence it will not be imagined that I have any spite against the trails. Nay, I will maintain that they are indispensable, and as the works of Nature simply marvellous.

# LOST,

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## THE STORY OF A STRANGE ADVENTURE.

I was sent by the Officer Commanding with a despatch to Pipeclay Creek, the telegraph line being down; and, since there were no 'jumpers' (light sleighs) in the Post, I travelled mounted, trusting that the weather would hold steady until I got back. I was well provided against the cold with a buffalo coat, fur cap, two pairs of riding breeches, three of stockings, and good moose moccasins. No one would have suspected any danger on that jolly winter day. The thermometer was steady at forty degrees below zero, the sun bright, and the air sparkling with tiny points of light, while the snow beside the trail shone like a sheet of gems. Breathing that clear air set all one's blood racing, and it seemed like a draught of spring water in one's throat. The frost from my breath soon made long icicles from my moustache; the film spread across my eyes and had to be brushed off every few minutes; my cap, and the breast of my coat were sparkling with frost, and the horse

Mounted Police 'Musical Ride' with Lancers—"GRANDS!"





was all white with rime. But a chap doesn't mind cold with good furs, an easy Mexican saddle, and a fine broncho like mine under him. Sometimes trotting a mile or so, but walking usually, and keeping Buck held in lest he should play out, I came at about noon to Brown's 'stopping place;' and, having rubbed down, watered, and fed my horse, I got Mrs. Brown, who is a fair cook although a half-breed, to make me some dinner. There must have been something wrong with the food, for it made me uneasy all the afternoon with something like colic.

It must have been four o'clock, and I had made some miles since dinner, when I saw that the weather was changing; and, although the sun still shone in a clear sky, the air became hazy, and breaths of wind began to sift up the snow in places. I tried to take my bearings, although I knew that there was not so much as a stone for twenty miles ahead, but the horizon was already hidden; and, in a few minutes after I first feared a change, there set in the wildest blizzard I had ever seen. The wind swirled in fierce eddies, the snow lashing my face like a thousand whips; and

where I could catch sight of the ground I saw that the trail was fast drifting over, and even Buck's fresh tracks were covered almost as soon as he made them. Seeing that there was no hope unless I kept the trail, I dismounted to lead Buck, who would do nothing but back up against the wind; and I might have got on even then but for the colic, that seemed to take all the strength out of me. Instead of warming I tired, and the snow was now so soft that there was great difficulty in making any headway. After a time my cheeks began to freeze; and, my hands getting wet in attempting to thaw them with snow, they got so numb that I couldn't dry them, and froze too. At last I mounted and left the way to Buck's instinct; and as a last resort fired off the seven rounds in my revolver in case there were any freighters near; but I could hear no sound except the wind howling all round, and began to give up hope.

I had read in dime novels of men lost on the prairie cutting their horses open and getting inside; but I guess that they only do that in dime novels, for a chap who would serve an old friend like Buck in that fashion deserves to freeze stiff.

I could see where the sun was setting, and knew that my proper course was south ; but which way did the sun set—North West ? I knew it ought to set there at that season, and so I must keep it to the right. Or was I to keep to the right of it ? And which was my right ? Before the sun set I believe I turned my face from it in order to go towards it.

I remembered as the night set in that if I fell asleep I should never wake ; so I rode on swaying from side to side of the saddle, so drowsy that I could hardly remember to keep my knees tight against the horse's sides. I beat my hands together until the arms ached, but could not warm them ; and, sometimes I slid down to the ground to walk until I could get my eyes open. I suppose the storm went down after the sun set, because I remember the night was very calm, and the stars unusually bright. There was a light on the horizon that seemed to come from a shack, for there appeared to be barns near it, and a hay rick. I tried all night to get to the light, but it seemed to keep just at the same distance off, and at last melted away.


It must have been at about noon the next day



that I remember sitting still in the saddle, and there being bushes all round ; and Buck went along a step at a time scraping away the snow with his hoofs, with his head down. I seemed to think that I was wanted somewhere, and yet could not tell where to go. I set Buck off at the trot ; and kept travelling some time, until the plain was all left behind and I saw Chief Mountain right ahead and made for a Pass beside it.

Soon I came to the Pass, and went in until the mountains shut in the view all around. The tops seemed to get higher and higher, and the gorge deeper and blacker, until the mountains actually began arching overhead, but miles high. I stopped still, and kept watching until I saw them join overhead ; and then they all fell with a crash over me and I was buried. First I was broad awake ; but a delicious sleep seemed to creep up me until I was nearly covered as it were with cold still water. But there was a beating going on in my brain ; and, while the sleep crept up my face and covered me, it crashed harder and harder, and then something seemed to close in over my eyes with a little throbbing, and I was dead.

I seemed to awaken without any body, and I had no size or weight, but only just *me*. I was hanging in awful eternity all dark and cold and full of horror. I was hanging on what seemed a thread of light, but I could not feel or see it. The ray or thread seemed to slant away forever upwards and downwards, and I was frightened lest I should fall off although there was nothing to fall to. But the most awful thing was being *alone*. I had never been *alone* in my life before, and it was so awful that for months after I could never think of it without terror. Then somehow I felt I was moving at a frightful speed as it were on an orbit like the earth does. Each time I passed round the circle *something* passed going in the opposite direction to me. And that other thing was *ME*, but not the *me* I had been before I died, but as it were another half of me I had never come across before. Each time we crossed something of knowledge passed between us. At first it used to be millions of years between our meetings, but the time between got shorter and shorter until I had hardly time to understand one meeting before another came. Once it seemed that one of a set of ten rounds was missed, and it was a horrible aching loss re-



peated every tenth round. At last I felt that I gained whole worlds of knowledge at each meeting, and kept waiting for them with fear, but yet felt that I existed for nothing else. And then they came so quickly that I had not time to expect them, for they were like crashes falling on me quicker and quicker and destroying me. At last they blended one with another with such a feeling as though the sun were to be suddenly blown out at noon; and that instant I was joined with the other *me* in one, knowing all things in Heaven and Earth, all things that ever were, or are, or shall be; and I said it was like the blowing out of the sun, for everything in the past, the present, or eternal future, everything in all Space and all Time was but ONE WORD—and the name of that one word was GOD!

We talk of the ordinary Being we call God as being great: but I tell you that then I was greater than any god I had known enough to think about. I don't want to be disrespectful to Him mind, because I know that He is greater than any ordinary god could imagine, so grand and terrible and good that I feel now as though I could cry with shame

at ever having said as much as a common damn. It may seem a queer thing for a man like me to be writing on such a subject; but I am a very different sort of chap since that dream, and I want to tell the World about the awful things ~~I saw~~.

As to what followed you must wait Reader until there is a Heavenly Language to write it down in. I saw God with these eyes, I saw Him as I would see you if you were standing before me now; but I could no more tell what He was like than—than blow out the sun. It was not meant that I should, or I should have been given a way to do it, so I will go on with my story.

When I awoke I was lying on the snow with my buffalo coat open, and Buck with one hoof on my breast, and gently licking my forehead with his rough tongue. I talked to him as I lay there, and he looked down in my face just as though he were trying to speak. I wish men would show as much feeling for a chap when he's down in his luck. I recollect distinctly saying "Are you dead too, Buck, old chap?" Then my head seemed to get quite clear, and I stood up. "Say Buck, we're dying—at least I am. We have got to get home

again somehow—which way shall we go, old man?" Buck took a long look all round, then sniffed and looked at me as much as to say "Well you'd oughter know." "I don't Buck, though," I said, "you see we're lost us two. Wait a bit we'll have a smoke and a bit of fire anyhow." I had matches and tobacco, and when I got the pipe lit I felt splendid. Then I took the despatch, and committed it to memory, and used the paper to light a fire of twigs from the poplar bush near by. I was not so badly frozen as I had thought, and the pain of thawing out braced me so that I began to feel hungry. There was no food to be had, so I chewed one of my mitts instead. I had eased Buck of the saddle, and found his back was not a bit sore, which surprised me considering the length of time he must have had it on. I found he had been keeping himself alive by scraping away the snow with his hoofs to get at the long grass near the bush, and in the hollows. I took a whisp of grass and rubbed him down until he began to feel quite comfortable, and to dance round as though he had been in the stable a week. I suppose he did this to cheer me up, for he couldn't have been so merry after having no oats since noon the day before.

By the time we got finished it was quite dark ;

so for fear of freezing if I slept, and knowing I must do all I knew how to get back to the Post, I steered North by the Pole Star, but could go no faster than a walk on account of the snow. For some hours we kept on, and I repeated all the poetry I could think of to keep up our spirits; and even got off two or three songs, which were not up to much for I am a poor singer. By and by I concluded I would try my hand at praying, that being the most appropriate thing on such an occasion. But I could only think of the Lord's Prayer, and part of the Ten Commandments, which I soon finished. Then I tried to recall my catechism, but I got it all mixed up. By the time I had got to Keeping one's tongue from picking and stealing I thought I had better quit. After that my mind began to be hazy again, and I knew that the delirium must be coming on, but could do nothing to prevent it. I repeated the multiplication table to try and keep my head clear, but it was no use, and I had the wildest fancies imaginable, so magnificent sometimes that I wonder that my mind could have imagined them. I seemed to be one Hero, a great ideal man, who had saved England by his own splendid daring in time of War; that some time in the twentieth century the Masses rose up and

overthrew the Government, and in the Revolution London was on fire, but Hero came and overthrew the mob government, and put out the fire. After that he built up the old Empire again, only more magnificent than men had ever dreamed of in the past; that he built up a great new London with a Capitol covering a mile square in the middle, adorned with a Cathedral whose dome soared up nine hundred feet into the sky; that he converted all nations to the Christian Faith, and caused a great re-union of all the churches; that he taught the world a new architecture, new sciences, new methods of art, and how to bring all the laws of Nature to be servants of Man; and at last how he was killed in a great battle in which England was fighting the whole world in defence of Freedom, aided by her colonies and the United States; and his death shook the whole earth.

The next thing I can recall was watching the Aurora in my natural senses, and I suppose the same night. There was a grand display that night—First came streamers of the common white, four bands abreast, and extending across the whole sky. When they got overhead they seemed to be

only a hundred feet overhead. In a minute all the four bands changed into snake-like strips of red fire, squirming about, and moving at a terrible speed, while behind them seemed to be a pale green ground. The huge, fiery snakes were so bright and sharp that more than once I thought I heard the queer rustling crackling sound that the Aurora make sometimes, but I may be mistaken. I was surprised at this, because I thought that that kind of Aurora, which I had seen once before, was only seen in the spring and fall.

Buck was again scraping away the snow ; and I set him off at a trot and went on for some time. Then it was broad daylight, and Buck was going at the keen jump when we came it seemed to the top of a hill ; below me lay the city of Montreal just as you see it from the Mountain. Buck balked and wouldn't go down the hill ; and as I had brought no spurs on the trip for fear of freezing my feet, I was obliged to swear at him until he started. When we got down into the town I made a break for home, for Mother lives in Montreal, and had been there since we came from England years ago. I reached the house, and tied the horse to the gar-



den railing; then stole in quietly at the front door, and found in the drawingroom sitting by the fire darning a stocking, just as I see her now while I am writing this; and I stole up behind her and kissed her.

Then the scene changed, and I was on the deck of my Father's old ship, with a regular Atlantic gale blowing; on the quarter deck stood Father just as I had seen him many a time; and the waves washed over the vessel again and again, and had we not all held on to bolts and shrouds we should have been washed overboard. A try sail was set to keep her steady, and the ship could stand not a rag of canvass more. But Father seemed to have lost his senses, and sent both watches aloft to make sail as though we had a summer breeze, instead of a storm that looked as if it was to be our last. However I went aloft too; and was on the yard arm with the men, while the sail we were working at was flapping angrily in our faces. Then I felt a sharp blow on the breast and face from the canvass, and heard Father cry out, and the next moment I was falling through space, and then many fathoms deep in the cold sea. I struck

out, and came up far in the wake of the ship : and was beaten hither and thither by the confused rush of the waves, that seemed to grin at me with the faces of the dead, all white as drifting snow. The gulls wheeled screaming in the air above, the wild waves circled round me like the vortex of the Maelstrom, and then all was still as death. I could hear a voice calling, but could not make out what was said ; and then I thought it was the voice of the Sergeant Major of my Troop calling out : "Now then—what are you about? Who told you to dismount—eh?" I knew that I must have been bucked off my horse in the Riding School, and that all the rest were waiting for me to mount again, but still I could not as much as open my eyes. There was a moving to and fro, and I felt myself carried on a stretcher to the Hospital. The next thing I was conscious of was the rumbling and jolting of wheels, the tramp of feet, and the awful music of the Dead March. I knew I was being buried alive, and I even thought I could hear my Mother crying behind, yet couldn't move or speak, or give any sign of life. I fought and fought but could make no sign, and presently felt to my horror that

I was dozing off again. I made one great struggle, and felt I could break my body to pieces rather than not be heard—then there was a low rushing sound, and I was awake.

The prairie round me was hazy, the wind was sweeping up the snow with low melancholy gusts, the sky was grey with clouds, and, as I watched, a heavy storm set in—not cold, but one of those moist heavy falls of snow, that with wind are taken for blizzards by many people. I watched the storm for a long time sitting quite still in the saddle, but then the delirium must have set in, for I became first a Russian Arch Duke and then a Montana Cow-boy.

After that I remembered very little of what happened; and, as the yarn is being dragged out to a much greater length than was intended, I will pass over the next three or four days, during which I must have become very feeble both in brain and body. I was stupid and dull, and my brain never fully cleared for a moment; but from what I can learn I must have travelled a long distance without knowing it. The weather must

have been mild or I would have been frozen stiff; and somehow I must have been looked after all that time, just as they say Providence looks after a chap when he's drunk. But one thing I will never forget as long as I live. I had been travelling down hill I thought, all one night, full of strange fancies. At last I imagined a party of Mounted Police was approaching up the trail, and I was glad to see them even though it was in a dream. As I rode straight towards the phantoms, expecting I suppose that the dream would dissolve as soon as I got close, I saw one of them open his mouth to speak. I heard a human voice speaking to me as in a mist; then I felt my body fall with a crash to the ground—and I remember no more.

\* \* \* \* \*

They say it was weeks and months before the doctors knew that I should live; a watch was kept by me in hospital night and day for forty five days, and on the forty sixth day I awoke in my right mind, and found my old chum himself sitting by the bedside. And you bet I feel mean after all that to think of the life I led before I was frozen; and that I thank the Great God who showed him-

self to me in my delirium, for making me a better lad, even at the expense of the most splendid physique that ever man had.


I am now at home with mother; and I wish you as good a nurse if ever you should happen to get stove-up reader.

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I hope it will not be considered an impertinence on the part of McNeill's chum to add a few words to this strange story.

I was one of the party sent out after the missing man, and was given charge of the party as a special favour on account of being McNeill's chum. He is a universal favourite, a man intended by nature to be more respected in the world than is usually the case with a hair-brained buck-police-man. He has both talent and originality; and, if not cursed with a roving disposition and a love for whiskey, might have risen to eminence.

We found him riding slowly down a main trail with his arms crossed upon his breast and his head down. His buffalo overcoat was spread under the saddle to ease and warm the horse at the ex-







pense of the rider, and it was his red serge jacket that first attracted our attention at a distance of perhaps two miles. As he came near he regarded us with a fixed stare, but showed no sign of recognition. When he got within a horse's length I called him by name: His whole body seemed to shrink and recoil at the sound, and then he fell with a crash from the saddle insensible. We carried him to the nearest Police Post, he having travelled nearly 150 miles during the seven days he was lost, and tended him with great care all the way. It was a long time before he recovered his faculties, and many months before he was fit to travel. In the meanwhile my time had expired, and not wishing to re-engage I delayed my return to the Eastern Provinces until my chum was fit to travel with me, he having been invalided pending his claim for a pension. On our arrival at Montreal he went home, and has since been sometimes better sometimes worse, but shows some sign of a permanent recovery. His lungs were injured by the frost, but I have no fear that he is really suffering as he says from Consumption; and his fine brain seems in some respects deteriorated. I think that he will be tempted by the coming summer when he sees the



ice melt and the sun shine out over the trees, and recover in time some of his old zest for life, and be himself again.

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This narrative is intended to represent some of the phenomena attending prolonged exposure to cold. Instances have been comparatively frequent of the recovery of persons frozen who have been for days protected by a covering of snow; but hitherto the Author has not been able to find in the Medical Records on the subject any instance of delirium from frost; unless that of one of the Arctic explorers who found cold affected his men like drunkenness can be accepted as a precedent. The minor detail of the following story is from personal experience, as also the phenomena of exalted delirium; but for the main outline of the theme the Author is indebted to an unfortunate member of the Mounted Police, who while on duty in Alberta was for seven days lost in winter, and during that period had neither food nor shelter, nor any association with men. His recovery was due to a fine constitution, and he is now fit for the ordinary occupations of life, although sadly disfigured, and deprived of that keen zest of life, and ambition, and capability which formerly characterised him. In another instance in the records of the Mounted Police, a man was, although only delirious for two hours at most, slightly impaired as regards the brain, and suffered for some time from injuries to two vital organs. No two cases of this nature would be alike, depending as they do so much upon the temperament of the individual, and the surrounding circumstances. Phenomena of this nature are fortunately so rare that the Medical Faculty have even in Canada few facilities for observation. There appears to be an interesting field of study here for future development.

# ERIC.

## CHAPTER I.

**T**WO pair of eyes may look out upon the world and scan in their wonderful unresting-way the same scene; and one pair will report a desert, the other a garden; one pair will tell of a land unfruitful, a people given over to rapine and murder, a climate of arctic cold or torrid sun-glare; while the other will go to the great commanding Brain saying the land floweth with milk and honey, the streams wash sands of gold, the soil is a nesting place for diamonds, a wheatfield of ungathered increase, and the wild flowers and the birds say that it is the paradise of legend and of faith—a terrestrial heaven. And sad to say most eyes speak evil of the world, and tell the poor blind masters of blind bodies that this is a monotonous and uninteresting earth, not half what they were led to expect when they immigrated; and what's worse, that they intend to be as miserable as they please under the circumstances right or wrong, and on general principles.

Young Eric must have been very perverse to

see things no-one else did, to say things no-one understood, to love tiger-lilies and all kinds of rubbish, and such nonsense as sunsets, and the light on the snow when the great white fire shone from behind the storm clouds. Then the lad put on such airs as though he owned the earth; and, as the withered old Scotch settlers said, went gadding in his ain daft way all over the plains, fooling around with the Mounted Police, who are no better than they should be, and spending all his life in the saddle, round the settlement, about the ranches, aye and airing himself in the villages, when he ought to be at the plough tail, like the rest of them. And why couldn't he dress like any other man, instead of imitating the white people, wearing a sombrero and long boots, and putting on no end of style, with his rings, and chains, and swan-necked spurs. And then he was always sporting his book-learning, and rhyming, and having his moods and his tantrums till there was no standing him. All the young men hated him like poison, and all the young women did also—aye, and had a sneaking admiration for him too; but there was no tangible evidence of his being mad as some folks said, except that he knew double as much as any in the

settlement, unless it was the Missionaries, who had taught him. Like enough the Missionaries were to be blamed for more than half his queer carryings on, but it is to be feared that the young man was past remedy, an incurable genius—and bless you, what could be more pitiful than a half-breed with genius?

And Eric didn't take the slightest notice, but just went on being a genius with no hesitation, as though it were the most natural thing in the whole world; and inhabited the earth in his own queer way, exactly as every other man didn't; and, sad to say, was the happiest man in the Territories.

How shall the look of his eyes be described? those great dark eyes that looked without fear or reproach abroad as the mountains look up to the heavens: those eyes that spoke all his thoughts like a lake reflecting the clouds; that would be as clear or as troubled as the weather, that were a very mirror of the world around him. How strong and square were the jaws, how boldly carved the strong sensitive nose, how sensitive the lips, how capable the forehead! And his body was built as statues were in the days of the old Greeks, every muscle a history of action. It seems

an impertinence to ask how such a man was come by : and indeed there was little in this instance known. His mother was an Arthabasca squaw, now very old, but once noble ; his father was variously reputed to have been a Scotch Hudson's Bay Factor, a Shetlander, and a Swede, who had gone up to the Peace River trapping, and had married the Arthabasca squaw aforesaid. But Eric had come down to the South when a child, and the woman, a widow ; had been trained by the Missionaries, who had been as fathers and more than fathers to him ; and learned English and Cree in his new surroundings, and an inveterate love of the prairie. When his mind and body had barely risen to a full growth he had been taken up into the mountains by a party exploring for gold, and although his nominal duty had been to tend the horses, Eric had shown the instinct that prompts old miners who are drawn to treasure as by a magnet, and had won far greater gain, than any other of the party. But this did not spoil him, but rather placed the lad on a level from which he could see the true worth of money, and not as a searcher after small and hard earned silver, overvalue it. Eric's mother was a thrifty woman, and her cows and her ponies prospered and became fat,

raising her above need ; and being brought up more among the bronchos than among boys, and loving them far more than mere humans, the young half-breed learned such riding as few men ever attain ; and as they said who hired him on the ranches, Eric could ride anything with hair on it. But with all his gifts he was often moody and fretful ; never unless among the most alluring flowers and woodland was he content ; and he had not recognized the real meaning of the consuming unrest that would never let him enjoy the goods so freely given to him, but longed with an unreasoning longing for something, he knew not what. Often under the influence of this feeling, readily mistaken for a craving for excitement, Eric committed excesses entirely unworthy of himself or any other man ; and then, bothered with unappeased remorse, would sink into so sombre a condition that even his old mother could scarcely elicit a smile.

There is always one great question about such a man : whether he will find scope for his endowments and master some great art, or drift on idly, bearing the rich freight of genius without either helm or sail until a storm arise. This man knew of no world to be famous in, he had no gifted

sculptor to emulate, or soaring inspiration in stone, or painting, or verse, or tongue to tell his thoughts, but like the inarticulate speech of a horse or dog, his gifted life found none to understand, and then the storm came and it was too late.

There was one woman upon whom he could look as he did upon nature ; and in his quiet straightforward way he loved her. She was a Scotch half-breed, an honest girl with a clean heart and a clear head ; and she read his eyes as her book of fate, and waited on patiently till he should speak. Somehow he never did ; and she would often sit down after he had left her, pondering in her simple heart why he should speak so much with his eyes, and yet his lips were silent ; just, she said, as if he were afraid to speak. It was quite beyond her little ken that men who will face a bullet or a cinnamon bear, or anything else with an air of certainty and decision about it, are scared to face a real pure woman, as though more than an ordinary life depended on it—as there generally does.

The trouble came so easily, so naturally, that nobody would have boded much ill therefrom ; it was only that while Eric was away down south during one of his moods, two lively young fillies

strayed into the widow's band of horses. The crowd objected to the intrusion at first ; but really the strangers were so lively and agreeable that they were unsuspiciously taken into confidence on the strength of their good looks—a thing often they say disastrous among much wiser creatures than horses

And it happened that these same horses were described by Stokeson the great trader and rancher as having been stolen from the range ; and the Police had been directed to look out for the thief. The rancher's brand was recognised on two of the horses in the widow's band ; and, Eric having returned in such a manner as excited suspicion, he was arrested for horse stealing, and thrown into the guard room at the Barracks.

Moreover the lively young fillies gave no further account of themselves than the brands on their quarters, and the widow's horses said nothing to exculpate their young master ; so that in due course Eric stood before the assize a felon, and the Magistrate "made an example of him." So was the young life wrecked, and the priceless freight destroyed in the great deep. And then the



widow died of sorrow, and the woman he loved was mute.

"Six years hard labour" it was like a winter coming to freeze the young life out of the Spring.

Six years hard labour—well my bonnie lad'll be forsaking his mad reckless ways the now, there are no brave tiger lilies in the lock-up—and its just a lesson to the other lads not to be tearing about after things that they can't ken, but just stick to the good old honest plough and leave they things to the lasses as don't know no better, for what were good for their fathers is good enough for they, and ye ken there was never no guid come of knowing too much.

Perhaps the old fellows were right—who knows?

~~Gaol~~ might have served well enough for some besotted wretch whose life was one craving for drink, or a worthless rake who had squandered honour and fortune; it might have saved the country from a whiskey sneak, or a dirty ruffian, or an immature lad ruined by evil thought; but humanity in the Fort, that had chaffed the half-breed for his fine clothes, sorrowed for the best

rider in the settlement, the bold lad whom they had come to respect almost as much as a white man, but who had been fool enough to steal horses, and ass enough to be caught. Sterne, who lay in the next cell, wondered at such a likely looking young chap giving himself up without fighting; and, on that worst count in the indictment, doubted that perhaps after all he was not to be trusted when the carpenter's brace and bit had severed the two short sections of logs that barred him in. And Sterne sat whistling to hide the noise of the tool; and pondered over the little piece of determined inflexible steel that was boring its way to the outside world, only to be dragged back at the moment it had reached the far side, to begin the escape all over again with just as much energy, just as much courage. The half-breed must surely be a fairly good guide; he had been all his life wandering about the country, and if he had stolen horses before he would hardly object to gaining his freedom by doing so again. Sterne was not a man to think without definite purpose, not a man to grasp detail and not the whole. He was a man of resource, possessed of that rarest gift—executive ability. But why was such a man a prisoner? Drink.

He had been an officer in the Imperial service,

and had fought in Egypt and South Africa; he had been married when but a boy, and was now a widower with two daughters at school in Edinburgh, and a young son earning a living somewhere in the United States. On leaving the Service he had come with some little capital to Manitoba, and spent all the money at the outset prospecting i. e., drinking. Perhaps, however, he had done a little farming, which would more readily account for his being ruined: for like all or nearly all English emigrants of good birth, he was an excellent shot and a fine rider, but utterly unfitted for farming. When nearly destitute, Sterne had realized the necessity of getting to some place where there was no liquor, and where employment was to be had to keep him alive; and took the only apparent means of gaining these two ends by enlisting in the Mounted Police. A soldier by nature and education, he would have readily attained a good rank in the service, had the curse of drink been really removed out of sight; but it is a notable fact that prohibition is the strongest incentive to disobedience, and whiskey at \$5.00 a bottle is not any more wholesome than the same at 40 cents elsewhere, and as a matter of fact is given to

freezing solid on winter nights, if it gets a chance—which is not often.

So when Corporal Sterne had been invited by letter to visit Capt. Brown, an old comrade, for the purpose of enjoying three days fishing, and obtained a 'pass' for that purpose; the upshot was that he returned to barracks under the influence of liquor, a day late, and when called to 'attention' on the parade ground, grossly insulted the Commanding Officer. He was reduced to the ranks, given seven days imprisonment, and deprived of all prospect of further promotion for some years to come. Feeling thoroughly disgusted and ashamed, Sterne, at the expiration of his sentence deserted, with a view to obtaining some better scope for his energies in another country; but was captured before reaching the frontier, and given nine months imprisonment with hard labour.

It was thus that at the time that Eric was imprisoned, Lawrence Sterne was slowly and stealthily cutting out the way to freedom with a brace and bit through the log wall of his cell. More prisoners were brought in shortly afterwards, and it became necessary owing to the crowded state of the Guardhouse to place another man in the same

cell with Sterne; but the Sergeant Major kindly offered him his choice among several as to who should be his companion. Sterne had now no hesitation in deciding that Eric should share his plan of escape, and named the young half-breed, who was accordingly quartered with him until the whole batch should be shipped to the more commodious prisons at Regina and Stony Mountain. That night the two men of such opposite nature and origin sat amicably together on the floor of the cell, the one working steadily with the brace and bit, while the other masked the noise with a song.

The last hole was bored, and a good strong blow administered to the loose logs at a time when some men coming in off 'pass' after "Lights Out," were making a noise in the Guard Room. The prisoners crawled out through the aperture and quietly replaced the logs without being discovered; and once outside, keeping well away from the lantern carried by the picquet on his rounds, they crawled from cover to cover, now along a fence, anon under the shadow of a building, until, undiscovered, they reached the open country, and set off on the main trail southward at a good swinging pace, that, kept up through the long hours

that followed, brought them early next morning to a 'stopping place' at least thirty miles on their way to the frontier.

Both men were well known to the keeper of the place, who gave them water to wash off the dust of the trail; a breakfast to make them feel strong again; beds for a short rest; and enough whiskey to make them feel cheerful for the remainder of the day. It was near noon when they sat at the table in the rough kitchen that occupied the ground floor, taking a final drink of whiskey, and packing up some provisions for their future requirements. The country had been scanned carefully all round a minute or so before, and there had been no travellers in sight; but suddenly the sharp tramp of horses fell on their ears; and, before they had time to pass the only door, two Government revolvers were pointing in their direction, while Sergeant Irving uttered the conventional formula of arrest: "Thumbs up!"

"Well I'll be hanged!"

"You.....piebiters—why the.....  
..... couldn't you have lit out while you were about it—Why the blazes did you stay here? Why half the Troop's been on your tracks."

"Oh well it all comes of running around loose doesn't it old chap. Come Eric it's no use sulking about it anyway. When did you find out we had skipped Irving?"

Why when they unlocked the cells this morning. There lay your blankets that old Calker had taken 'check roll' of three times during the night—and he says that he'll be eternally jiggered if he ever takes stock of a prisoner's blankets again without seeing the whole scalp. How did you come by the tools anyhow Sterne? I must say you did pretty well for a coyote."

"Eric old man" said Sterne "you needn't be standing there like a wet day thinking profane swears—that's downright wicked. Come on you fellows and have a drink before we report for duty to old "Serious Offence" (the Officer Commanding.) So the Sergeant and Constable Evans, generally known as the Shavetail, so far neglected their duty as to have a couple of drinks before proceeding to more serious business; and more over, when Sterne proposed to show the crowd a new trick with cards while their host was harnessing up his team, Sergeant Irving, who was too good a fellow to make a good gaoler, consented.







MOUNTED POLICE BARRACKS, HATTIESFORD.

The four stood together over the table in the middle of the room; Sterne in the progress of the trick requested Irving to select a card from a pile on the table, and at the same moment administered a sharp kick to Eric, which, with a quiet glance, placed him on the alert; Eric standing to the left of the Shavetail whipped out the latter's revolver from the open holster at his side, and presented it at the owner's head; as Irving picked up the card he received a stunning blow behind the ear, and turned to receive a second between the eyes that laid him on the floor stunned; the Shavetail turning towards Eric, the latter jammed the revolver against his forehead and backed him slowly against the wall. A sharp whistle from Sterne brought the keeper of the place on the scene; and Sterne, quietly winking to him, drew the revolver from Irving's holster as he knelt on his chest; and, presenting it at the host's head, bade him on pain of death to procure some ropes. The latter, realising that Sterne had used compulsion to save him from getting into trouble afterwards, procured ropes with which the unfortunate policemen were firmly bound.

"Sorry to cause you any annoyance old man," said Sterne, as he bound Irving hand and foot, "but discipline must be maintained in all military affairs. Beastly mean I know—but then you see it feels still meaner to be locked up during the first flush of youth, particularly to an orphan like me. Tell old "Serious Offence," with my compliments, to go to blazes. So long, old man; our good host will turn you loose when I am far away, and he can put up the drinks at the expense of my back pay if he likes. Farewell!"

And Sergeant Irving and the Shavetail had the satisfaction of hearing the retreating footfalls of their horses, the voices laughing as the outlaws rode away, and the condolences of the host as he cut them loose and set up the drinks.

## CHAPTER II.

There was no wind; and the sun blazed down upon the prairie, casting deep shadows under the poplars; and, flashing along the little lakes beside the trail, showed as in a mirror the rippled wakes of convoys of young ducks under escort of the stately old birds, who sailed about teaching their families how to bridle and courtsey, to dive, and to oil their plumage properly to keep out the wet. There stood a solitary sandhill crane on the rank borders of a mere, a very sad bird with an aggrieved but subdued look, as though he were contemplating the grave of a rich aunt, whose legacies had gone astray. The rabbits were out-paying their calls just like humans, and thankfully leaving a card when the victim was not at home. The gophers upon the little hills close by were perched on their lookout stations trembling at imaginary dangers, and darting down to the lower regions now and anon to see that the house was really safe, with no tramps, or fires, or children, up to mischief in their absence. Safe under cover was a

silver fox, very much concerned lest his hundred dollar coat should find its way to a market; and his wife and family were in the vicinity safe at home.

The position of the fox afforded a view for some miles down the main trail, which was bordered here and there with rose bushes, it being a long grass country, and much broken with gopher holes and stones. From his cool shelter he observed a spot in the far distance resolve into two horsemen. The horses were tortured with flies, galled with the saddles, hot, dirty, and uncomfortable, convinced that the whole affair was a put up job for their annoyance; and the riders felt not a whit more cheerful, for they were tired, thirsty, and as surly as bears—if bears are surly, which is doubtful. Altogether the outfit looked and felt so quarrelsome and unhappy that the fox actually turned away with a smile, as he sought some cooler spot, and left Sterne and Eric to pursue their glad way to freedom.

Their long ride brought them after several days to a frontier town in Montana where they wisely handed the property they had borrowed from the Canadian Government to the United

States Authorities, thus escaping all difficulties about extradition. Both men readily obtained employment at a rather wild construction camp on the Northern Pacific Railway, then being constructed ; and Eric saw the steam horse and the railway carriages for the first time. They were by this time fast friends, and kept together as much as possible to the surprise of the crowd, who could not understand a man like Sterne living and chumming with a copper coloured half-breed. While they were smoking together one evening they talked of the future ; and Eric turned the whole discussion on his friend's affairs. Sterne said he didn't care a hang either way, but intended in future to give up civilized life for that of the frontier, and enjoy life while it lasted ; nor could the other turn him from his purpose. Sterne said he would not disgrace his daughters in England ; who, with some provision he had left for them, were far more likely to live well, than with his evil influence and vile habits constantly before them.

"No Eric," he said, "I'm pretty bad I know, but I'm not so far gone as that. Let the girls go.

out into life and learn to stand alone—if they cannot stand firm on the lessons that their poor mother taught them what good could I do. Oh Eric, if it were not for this great curse that is on all our white race, this thirst, this craving, I might have been—I might have—Oh Hell! what am I getting off! What are you going to do with yourself old man?"

"I am going back."

"Going back! What, are you losing your wits man?"

"Yes, I think I am; there seems something coming down like the darkness over me, something that I can't fight off at all. You are my brother here—I know I am only a breed, not white like you, but we have got herded together somehow, and you're my elder brother—Don't laugh at me. I am different from the rest: I came from the far North, no-one knows where, and I was kept apart among the horses, and haven't so much sense perhaps. Well I couldn't farm, for I hate work like all the other Indians I suppose; but could do nothing but look after the horses. You know

there was something I had that no-one else had ; and I think that this trouble when they said I was a thief took away that thing I had. You see I am not fit to work with you white men ; I can't own a store or be a soldier, so I will go back, I want to go to my girl, or I think I shall be what they call mad."

And from that time the half breed saved every dollar that he earned by his work that was not needed for his food or tobacco ; but neither did he speak again of his plans or of himself in the slightest way to his chum. But while the half-breed laid by money, the white man drank, played cards, and shared largely in the mischief of the camp, making boon companions of the worst ruffians, and vying with them in his excesses. After some time Eric bought a horse from his savings, a young broncho ; and proceeded to break him to the saddle, telling Sterne that this was to take him across to Canada ; and Sterne, moved by the devotion of the other, vowed that he would ride mile for mile back with him if it cost him his life. Although the half-breed laughed at the empty promises, from that time forward some gleams of

2



light came to him, and he was visited at night by dreams. But still over his whole life there seemed to be a shadow, some loss of self control, dark moods, and signs of madness.

Sterne had at this time a run of luck, and his gains over a certain rather noted gambler roused that dirty ruffian to a sneaking revenge. The man waylaid Sterne one night after play was over; and Eric, roaming about in one of his bad moods, came by chance upon him, and, puzzled by his actions, remained silently watching in the rear. Then Sterne passed that way returning homeward; and Eric, seeing the purpose of murder, cried out as the desperado fired, causing him to miss; and then, as the trigger clicked for a second shot and Sterne was unprepared, Eric committed murder in his friend's defence, and the man fell dead before him.

Here came a crisis in their affairs; and gathering what money they had, Eric taking his own horse, and the other stealing one, they escaped from the camp before the murder was discovered, and the vigilantes at large; and made with all speed for the Canadian boundary.

So these two rode on together northward, keeping almost unbroken silence, travelling by an unfrequented route, making their marches during the cool nights, and often suffering much from hunger. Once or twice Sterne proposed that they should seek the main trail, and take to the road holding up mail stages and travellers for a living, an enterprise then almost unknown in Canada. But to these suggestions his friend, little claim as civilization had upon him, paid no attention whatever. The Autumn was very hot, and the smoke of prairie fires was to be seen in all parts of the horizon. Towards the end of their journey a strong wind sprang up from the northward bringing down a great fire directly towards them on both sides of the trail. Although Sterne showed signs of alarm, and wanted to seek safety in flight, Eric rode on straight at the fire; and, on Sterne continuing to protest, told him that he was a coward. Sterne, nettled by the other's taunts, rode abreast; and it was only after the horses had passed with a slight singing over the barrier, and had eased their minds with a tearing gallop afterwards, that Eric condescended to inform his companion that he must be a tenderfoot to be rattled at a prairie fire

in short grass. From that time Eric possessed a certain influence over the white man, who rode with him into the settlement where had been his home without showing further signs of anxiety.

When at last they reached the Saskatchewan; a secure camp was made in some bush by the river side; and at the close of the day Eric went down to the bank to wait hidden among the trees by a path, until the woman he loved should pass. She came in the cool of the evening for water, and passed silently by. Once Menie had been used to run lightly down the bank, and her voice in the old days to ring merrily through the woodlands: but now she walked, and in silence. Eric strode out into the path when she had gone; and, taking the sash from his waist, made of it the rude figure of a heart, and returned to his shelter. Menie came slowly up the path, and the shape lay before her. Then she left the pails, and ran and lifted up the sash, and raised it high above her head, and cried aloud for joy. So Eric knew that she loved him.

The water was brought to the house very late, disgracefully late, that evening.

When the stars were out Eric came back to the bivouac, where sat Sterne smoking by the fire.

"Well lad—what news?"

"She loves me."

"Why of course she does if she has any taste. But how about the live stock?"

"Stolen."

"Naturally, but who stole them?"

"Menie says Stokeson did."

"Yes? And he charged you with the theft of his two horses, and got you into all this trouble—Oh most virtuous Stokeson how I long to wring thy gentle neck!"

"I am going for my cattle. Sterne, will you help me?"

"Aye, that I will."

Late as the hour was the two men were presently in the saddle, and pursuing a half perceptible trail in the direction of Stokeson's house.

In all the settlement this man was most

sincerely hated. Rich in lands and mortgages, esteemed by the authorities, of unexceptionable decency and credit, a regular attendant at church, Mr. Stokeson was reviled as a usurer, a sneak, and a sycophant; was reputed to shamefully rob the Government in his large contracts; and to deal with a heavy hand with the merchants by underselling, and with the farmers, by payments for crops in trade instead of cash, and by mortgages. This amiable gentleman was slandered concerning undue percentages, bribes, and secret drunkenness, and all the most dreadful and unheard of iniquities; and even the very respectable ladies of the missions agreed that he certainly was no better than he should be.

When this victim of the vulgar mob of unbelievers was refused credit for his good citizenship in ridding the community of a horse thief; and on the unfortunate death of the criminal's mother, for taking good care, with the sanction of authority, of the orphan's heritage; but was called bad names, and his magnanimous conduct termed murder and robbery; no wonder that the poor gentleman's feelings received a severe shock—no

wonder he became disgusted with the ingratitude of the people.

As he sat this night in his study, the household long ago retired, and brooded over his virtues and sins of other people, a knock was heard at the door of the room, and there stood the orphan before him. Although the outlaw carried no arms, his visit was certainly formidable at that time of night; and in great agitation the merchant reached for a gun, saying in a trembling voice "Go away—er—Go away!"

Eric begged him to be calm; and quietly stated that before leaving the country he had come to thank him for taking care of his property; and would now receive it back from him, to give it to the girl who was to have been his wife, and who was so poor.

The merchant couldn't think of handing over to an outlaw property held by him in trust for the Government.

At this Eric whistled softly, and a revolver was placed in his hand from behind, while a masked man took his place at his side, and both

levelled on Mr. Stokeson's irreproachable waistcoat. After being quieted by a hint, the gentleman was then ordered to take pen and paper, and write at dictation ; and, shortly afterwards, thanks to Sterne's slight acquaintance with the forms of conveyancing, the two outlaws left the house bearing with them a deed duly completed, resigning all claim to Eric's property in cattle, land, and chattels, and an ample security both for restitution and subsequent good conduct.

Thus the ungrateful and malignant youth robbed his benefactor, against whom all the ungodly evil minded public sat in judgment, simply because it was jealous and hated his honest gains. Even if he tried to gain redress for his wrongs they would all turn against him and side with the robbers, and then he would never get his long desired seat in the Council. They were all a pack of thieves anyhow, and deserved to be cheated for siding against law and justice ; aye and the virtuous Mr. Stokeson would see that they got their deserts too—all of them.

On the following night the two men sat by their fire in the woods, the bright flames lighting

up their arms and the pleasant colours of their western dress as they talked.

"Sterne, I must tell you what I did today. You know the old lawyer Eccleson who used to be so kind to me—I took Stokeson's deed to him, and told him how we got it. It was perfectly safe with him, and he laughed all the time, and said that it was quite binding, and he would register it. Then I got him to make out a paper by which I give Menie Mother's farm, and all the stock, and the house. I had just made a letter to Menie to say good-bye when the police caught on to the racket, and I had to skip out. I suppose they must be scouring the whole country by this time, but I set them off on the wrong scent, and they will never catch on to this cache, so near the barracks.

"Do you know, Sterne, that since we came home my wits are keener than they ever were before, and I seem to have got back that thing I had before the trouble came—What is it—you must know."

"My lad, it's the greatest thing in the world—



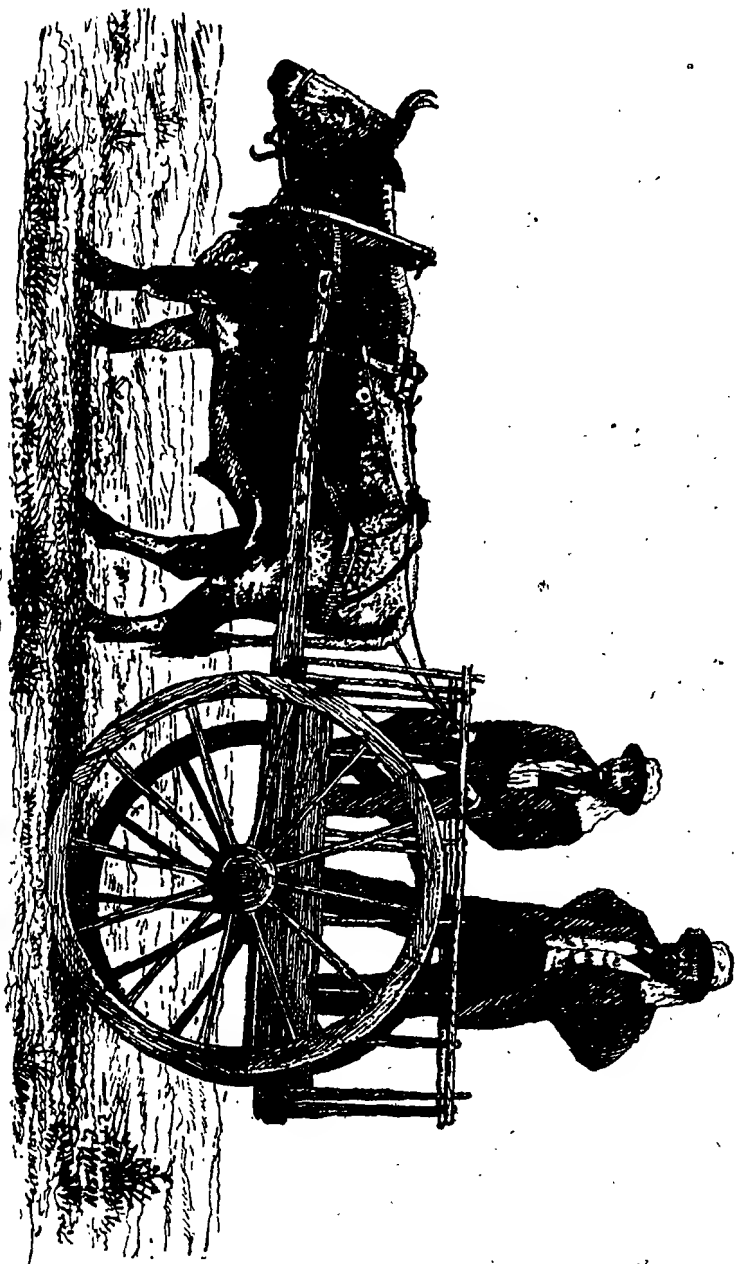
the thing that makes Statesmen, Artists, Engineers, Poets, Sculptors: that makes them remembered when the cities and even countries they lived in are forgotten—Genius."

"And have I this great gift? This is what makes the bulls of the herd, the chiefs, the—Oh Sterne this is not lost—this gift is me, and I shall be immortal—Genius cannot die with the body—no—no—no!

"Sterne, I am going away tonight, and we shall never run in harness together again. Will you be angry at what I am going to say."

"No, why?"

"Because you are a proud Englishman. You came all this way to help me; and now we must part, and I want to help you. Don't think that because I am a half-breed I am blind. You English have brought us Laws, and comfort, and Religion, and everything that makes us better than the poor 'nitchies' who you have ruined. If you hadn't brought disease and death they would have worshipped you as gods; but I doubt our people and even the Indians see things hidden from you."



A RED RIVER CART.



1—

with all your wisdom. Your civilization has made your senses numb so that you don't see, or smell, or hear, or feel, half as strongly as we do.

"Bodies are houses in which men live; and wise men will keep them strong and good—What do you think of a man who pulls down the walls of his house, and sets it on fire, or makes it even dirty and uncomfortable—A lunatic? But that is what you do with drink. What will happen when the house is in ruins; and you have to face the blizzards, and the hot sun, and the rain, without shelter?

"And then a man without honour is a tree without leaves, a useless stump cut down for the camp fire. Why have you stripped off the leaves, and the blossom, and even the fruit of your fine tree? What is the use of being a white man if you steal? Sterne, you must return that horse you stole in Montana—No man ever gained by theft.

"I do not know how I dare talk like this to you—perhaps it is because I see ahead a time when I shall stop doing wrong if the Great God will. It is very bitter to look back and see one's trail all mire and muskeg with even stains of blood. Oh how I would warn you!

"This advice is but the idle running of a stream; but what is water to those who thirst, Sterne? Your Great Chief, Christ, gives us water; and if we drink it we shall live forever. This is the Great Medicine for every man's want.

"But the future is as dark as these woods for us, because we have done wrong. I think you had better go to Manitoba as we said, and give yourself up to a Magistrate, which will get you off with a fine for desertion; and you will be able to face the world again. I shall never be able to come back. The lawyer said my only show is to appeal to a higher court. Take these to Menie for me, or leave them where I said—I can't break it to her myself. The letter is to tell her to marry an honest man. Be a brother to her when you are free—oh how I wish you might be more than a brother to her!

"Oh Sterne, you must beware—you have wrecked your body, deserted your children, cast away your honour—you have done wrong: and to do wrong is to dare Judgment."

"I almost think the day is breaking Sterne—a light shines in upon the woods. Good-bye."

The woodlands opened their arms, and the great river spread out wide into a lake, calm, deep, and still. And as the trees looked down upon the mere; and, framed in the shadow of the night, began to see their pictures far below, a man strode down into the waters, and cast his breast upon the deep. His arms washed back the sparkling waters; the ripples followed in his wake, and murmured back upon the shore; and above, and lingering still among the trees, the white mists hovered gently over all. Prophecy was in the air, and wakened with the voices of the birds to say new life was come. The moments were shadows of coming glory; the mists an incense; the river a path of silver, then of gold—And ere the great light burst upon the world, the man had carried an appeal far past his kind, beyond the clouded gates of the morning, beyond the majesty of the rising sun, on—on—beyond Time, beyond night—even to the tribunal of the Last Day, to the presence of the Most High God.

# The Death of Wakuzza.

FROM THE "CATHOLIC RECORD."

In the year 1795, a Hudson Bay Co's Factor, named McAlpine, was sent with a party of Athabasca Indians to explore the remotest parts of the valley of the Mackenzie River; and, when several hundred miles north of any known habitation of man, a snow shoe track was discovered. Astonished at what appeared supernatural, the party examined the marks with great care, and pronounced them to be the tracks of a woman of the Dog ribbed tribe—the bitter enemies of the Athabascas. The track was followed for some days along the banks of the Red Deer River, and ultimately they discovered a hut in a little grove of spruce trees. A squaw was found therein, a Dog-rib woman, and of marvellous beauty. Her story was as follows: Some years before she had, while on a hunting expedition, been taken prisoner by a party of Athabascas, her husband and two babies being murdered. She became the slave, and ultimately the wife of her captor; and lived long on the banks of the Lesser Slave Lake. Finally in the spring time, she escaped with a canoe, and wandered many hundred miles in search of her people; but finding that there was no hope of being restored to them, she had built a shanty in the woods, and lived by snaring animals for her food and dress. Her heroic endurance, and splendid courage, alone enabled her to escape the perils to which she had been exposed; and now, when recaptured by the enemies of her people, she was found surrounded by all the comforts known to the Indians. After telling her sad story, the woman threw herself upon the white Chief's generosity, and was brutally repulsed. The Indians then wrestled for her, and the victor claimed her as his slave. What followed is told in her own words, forming the subject of the following verses:

Shadows of night! Terrors of death about me!

A slave to foes, the arch foes of my nation!

I, the poor, hart that lapp'd the springs of Freedom

When I escaped the thralldom of my captors,

When I escaped the bondage of my masters,  
When that I fled from their detested lodges—  
Why did I live to be again their victim ?

Long, and at peace I dwelt amid these forests ;  
And the Good Spirit all my wants provided—  
Gave me the rabbits captured by my snaring,  
And the soft furs to warm my hut in winter ;  
Nearer the regions of eternal winter  
Than any came, or ever dared before me.

Oh ye damp Swamps—weep your sad fevers for me !  
And rest my woes, O River, on thy bosom—  
Mountains and Winds echo my wail of sorrow !  
Far from my home—far from the joyous prairie ;  
Shades of my fathers—Chieftains of my people—  
Ere the dark tent of night shall hide my slumber—  
Ere that I sink forever in the darkness—  
Hear the lament, the anguish of Wakuzza !

From thy cold breasts, O Earth, I suck oblivion,  
Borne to the earth by my dark fate's pursuance.  
Ere I shall pass forever into silence—  
Ere by my death I save the last possession,  
And the great gift and medicine of mine honour—  
Leap up for once my dying fires to splendour—  
End thou in blazing prophesy my Spirit !

Shall the lone widow cry in vain for vengeance  
Over her husband's blood, and slaughtered children ?  
Widowed from home, and all that makes life welcome,  
Widowed of all good things, but of the falchion  
That must needs lap my full breasts of their life-blood !

From cold and hunger ever was I guarded,  
I dwelt at peace with Nature, and she loved me.  
When did the sun or stars or tempests harm me ?



What trees or floods were waiting for to slay me ?  
Who e'er, but coward Man, made war on Woman !

Shall yon dark Mountains list, and unavenging,  
Still roll long thunders down the hidden canyons,  
When all the Plains shall cry aloud for vengeance,  
For that a woman's blood was cast upon them ?  
Nay, all the Earth shall arm her to avenge me ;  
Nor the red-lap of murder rest her children !

And as I die, as ye shall see me perish,  
Ye too shall die, and pass into the Silence ;  
Nor death, nor penance ever shall avail ye.  
Beware—ye base relentless Athabascas !  
I see your bones are white beneath the sunlight—  
I see your Nation rotting from the daytime—  
And such a frightful Death as yet you know not  
Shall flap his wings in triumph o'er your women—  
So all the dead are foul upon the prairie ;  
And all your Tribe rot down into oblivion !  
And thou White Chief—because there is no pity  
In thy cold heart, thou, like yon pallid snowdrift,  
Shalt find no rest from tempests of affliction ;  
And cold relentless blizzards drift your lifetime,  
Until you, yearning to lie down and slumber,  
Shall plead in vain ; for the wild wind shall mock you,  
And never shall you know the warmth of pity  
To melt away your sorrows in the Springtime !

Ye laugh because ye see I am defenceless—  
Because I cannot e'en outstrip your arrows,  
Or garrison the fortress of my virtue  
Against your lusts ! And yet your blinded fury—  
The very keenness of your bad desires  
Left me a road—a broad road to escape you !  
Behold, O Chief—the slave you scorn despise you ;

Behold my suitors—I, the wrestler's guerdon  
Have blood to seal and ratify our nuptials !

*(Stabs herself.)*

Now shall my shadow haunt ye, until Vengeance  
Shall thunder down the judgments of the Highest,  
As avalanches on yon riven Mountains—  
So shall your bad deeds make your souls accursed  
And the Great Spirit blast you to Destruction !

## BUCK STANTON.

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“D’ANVERS, how would this shirt fit you old man?”

“Don’t ask me Tom, I’ve given up buckskin years ago.”

“Come on—try it as a special favour to me—I would like to see you in a man’s dress.”

So for once he took off his black clerical coat as we sat smoking by the log fire, and put on the shirt of buckskin. The soft rich colour was flushed in the fire-light, the fringes fell gracefully over his shoulders, and though the wavy hair was turned grey, and the bronzed skin was now pale, and the worn face looked stern, I saw the light of the prairies come back into his grey eyes, and my heart went out to the fair brave face and the priest in the man’s dress.

“And what on earth made you a Missionary?”

“Why the Grace of God to be sure.”

“But how? Do you always lock up your heart like one of these Jesuits d’Anvers?”

"I'll tell you how I became a parson. I hope you won't laugh at me for being sentimental.

"It is some years since I was out for a winter trapping around the foot hills of the Rockies and Selkirks; and just when the winter let up after a poor season, I struck gold, and it was so rich I kept on washing all summer; and late in the fall I took my pile of 'dust' and the peltry from the winter's work, down to Fort Calgary, which was only a Hudson's Bay Post at the time. Well it was just after the "round up" on the ranches, and a lot of 'cow punchers' were up at the Fort painting things red. You know that the Company used to have rum and old brandy that beat all creation; and I was in the store drinking with the crowd the first night until I had had considerably more than was good for me. Some of the 'boys' were beginning to get pretty noisy, but nothing out of the way happened until one of the fellows, a very old hand, "set 'em up" with extra ceremony, and to my horror one of the crowd refused to drink. I knew at once that there would be a scene, and backed round to where Buck Stanton was sitting on a tub with his arms folded, perfectly sober, and not the least bit sulky, but refusing to touch a drop of liquor because he "wanted to give his

whole pile to the 'old woman' at home, and wasn't bumming around for free drinks." Drunk as I was at the time, there was something about that chap that made me feel ashamed of myself, he seemed such a fine fellow sitting there—and I determined to take his part." "Buck was a very handsome man, with clear blue eyes, and wonderful long silky hair worn down his back, as those fellows do wear it, they say to make their sight better.

"Well, the man who wanted to treat felt insulted, and he declared it was to be a matter of drink or fight—and it ended as I had feared in shooting, about the only case I ever heard of on this side of the line. The aggressor must have been too drunk to take aim, and Buck's bullet went clear through the other's brain. That sobered me, and I came to Buck's defence as the whole mob set on him; and after a few minutes I got him safely out of a side door, and we made for the river with the whole crowd after us. The sudden change to the fresh air must have made them feel the effects of the liquor more, for they were too drunk to follow very rapidly, and we gained the river bank some way ahead of

them. At the point on the bank to which Buck led we found a little canoe only large enough for one.

"I remember most vividly how his blue eyes looked down into mine, and he said hurriedly 'Stranger, I'm winged, can't paddle worth a damn anyway—get in quick and take this letter to my Mother—and God bless you, stranger. Shake!'

"I remember shaking hands with him, taking a heavy letter which I found afterwards in my shirt, shoving off the canoe, pushing out across the stream, dodging a shower of bullets.

"And then I stood on the other bank free—and there was Buck Stanton in the dusk daring the crowd to come on—and then he fell!

"Didn't it seem shameful for me to be standing there safe, a coward, while that brave man lay dead? Fancy a man who faced certain death rather than that his widowed mother should be without the savings of a year's hard work on the ranches. Didn't it seem beastly mean of me to be drinking my brains away when I could be the means of bringing purer and more perfect life to dozens of those fine fellows, who stained their

hands with blood only because they had never had teachers to tell them of better things, and to show them by example that manliness and Christianity are one Gospel.

"I may not have been wearing a man's clothes these last few years old fellow; but that is the reason I became a Missionary."

And as he finished and sat by the glowing pine logs that lit up the cabin of the Mission, the door from the cold winter outside opened, and a man stood in the shanty with his fur cap in his hand; and the fire-light streamed over him, and flooded with glory the wavy hair that fell, sparkling with fresh fallen snow, over his shoulders. And the fire-light shone on bold blue eyes; and the parson looked up from his reverie, and stood before his visitor silent. Then he found voice to speak, striding forward:

"Are you come from the dead? Speak—Buck Stanton—Speak!"

"No lad, they aint found out how to plug this chicker yet—Did you give my letter to the Old Woman? You did? Say, you're a MAN stranger—Shake!"

## "LIGHTS OUT!"

FROM THE TORONTO "WEEK."

The sentry challenged at the open gate,  
Who pass'd him by, because the hour was late—  
"Halt! Who goes there?"—"A friend."—"All's  
well."

"A friend, old chap!"—a friend's farewell,  
And I had pass'd the gate.  
And then the long last notes were shed,  
The echoing call's last notes were dead—  
And sounded sadly as I stood without  
Those last sad notes of all: "Lights out!"  
"Lights out!"

Farewell; companions! We have side by side  
Watch'd history's lengthen'd shadows past us glide,  
And worn the scarlet, laughed at pain,  
And buried comrades lowly lain,  
And let the long years glide;  
And toil and hardship have we borne,  
And followed where the flag had gone—  
But all the echoes answering round about  
Have bidden you to sleep: "Lights out!"  
"Lights out!"

And never more for me the helmet's flash,  
The trumpet's summons—Oh the crumbling ash  
Of life is hope's fruition: Fall  
The wither'd friendships, and they all  
Are sleeping! Fast away  
The fabrics of our lives decay,  
And change unseen and melt away—  
Aye, perish like the accents of a call,  
Like those last notes of all: "Lights out!"  
"Lights out!"





# THE WILDERNESS.

# THE LAURENTIDES.

FROM THE "CATHOLIC REVIEW," TORONTO.

- Of old men dream'd, and dream'd, and still do dream  
Of wonder lands and strange and vast expanses  
Amid unbalanced splendours and void planes,  
In awful heights of space and lonely silence,  
5. Who peopled with imaginary life  
The wide horizons of their ghostly vision ;  
Whose senses, open'd in huge solitude,  
The human hearing taste and sight transcending,  
Became the lenses of angelic sense  
10. Unlimited. Far mightier spectacles  
Than those of dreams has Nature ; larger realms,  
Had men the gift to see them in their fulness ;  
But lust is as a film upon their eyes—  
Were men not moles, whose habitudes of darkness  
15. Make dim the needless vision of the soul.

- Behold the mighty Laurentides. Could Slumber,  
Within the proscenae of our dreams,  
Build such a scene as this ? Could even Blindness  
Sit unastounded ? Mark these utmost bounds—  
21. The barren wastes, that chill cold Labrador,  
The voiceless terrors of the Polar seas,  
The thunder riven mountains of the West,  
And, to the South, transcontinental fields  
Of sunlit prairie, and the mighty lakes,  
25. Whose stormy capes and sad-hued battlements  
Defy the ceaseless menace of the waves.



THE APPROACH TO THE MOUNTAINS.



Laurentia ! Superb Laurentia !

The rude Norse gods, or hoary Jove, or Vulcan,  
 Could not have breathed thy native atmosphere—  
 Child of primeval violence gigantic—

Life's very father—old at History's birth,

Untutored by the wisdom of decline

Of these last bland creations—whom the sunlight  
 Found aged, and the swarming seas in wonder

35. Beheld unpeopled. Where the forest herbage

Upon the savage rocks could find no home—

Laurentia ! In thy rude leagues there dwelleth

Great Desolation throned upon the heights,

Whose guarded boundaries of massy ice-fields,

40. And rivers turbulent, and forest wilds,

Forbid the access of our gentle age ;

And, better fit for Scandinavian heroes,

Cyclopien dwellings, and titanic war,

Seem haunted by the ghosts of vanish'd ages,

45. Whose warfares rent the silver-veined hills,

And in the rudest wastes wrought worse destruction.

Whence came this eldest of the Earth's formations—

Of her fecund womb by eruption born ?

Like molten glass from the red crucible,

50. Shot prematurely to the clouded air

In weird, pre-solar gloom ? Nay, it was wasted

From the primeval hills in glitt'ring sand,

And pour'd by long-forgotten rivers downward

Into a steaming, cyclone-stricken sea,

55. To lie for ages on the Ocean's bosom.

Uplifted last from the abysmal deep,

And menacing the sultry firmament,

The mountain sides were delicately 'graved

And fashion'd by the patient sculptor Water,

60. Whose sensitive and watchful fingers wrought,

Arm'd with th' unyielding chisel of the ice,

With glacier, avalanche, and boist'rous torrent ;

Who, on the architecture of the world,  
 Carved deep the mountain's haughty lineaments,  
 65. And made mosaics in the ample plains,  
 And bas-reliefs of sculptured history  
 To tell Mankind the story of the world:

While other lands were plunged beneath the sea,  
 And isles submerged rose to the air of heaven,  
 70. And restless Change inhabited the world,  
 Kneading the clay that should be moulded Man  
 In after ages; while broad waters swarm'd  
 With life innum'able both small and great;  
 And rivers, lakes, and fields brought forth their kind,  
 75. And Nature bore all to their destined graves,  
 And stamped their forms as seals upon the rocks—  
 Seals to the bond whereby all creatures die—  
 Laurentia in dreamless slumber lay;  
 And Change, before her uninvaded shores,  
 80. Beat on the shingled precinct of her sleep,  
 And, like a wave, recoiled. Vast Laurentides,  
 In all thy first barbaric state sequester'd  
 From lesser, trivial, and more changeful times,  
 Rude, with uncultured, unembarass'd greatness—  
 85. No garden for a petty mind's contentment,  
 With measured littleness in order ranged—  
 But like the sombre, half-voiced forest,  
 Peopled with startled echo, awesome shapes;  
 Where wand'ring shafts of sunlight gild the leaves,  
 90. And wand'ring thoughts illuminate the mind;  
 Where every tree should teach Mankind of greatness:  
 To rear life's graces on a broad-based column  
 Of virtuous years, to cast a wide protection  
 And hospitality o'er gentler beings,  
 95. To live in goodly neighbourhood with all men,  
 And lift a brave face to the changeful sky.

Yet has age softened these austere cold wilds,

- That are not void of Earth's most gentle tenants,  
 Whose breasts, in these inhospitable wilds,  
 100. Would else be childless: and no barren consort  
 Of Power is the All Mother who has nurtured  
 The furry peoples of the northern wastes,  
 Made all the crystal waters bring forth silver,  
 And beat the cold air with unnumber'd wings.  
 105. Bright humming-birds flash in the southern sun-light  
 Of that strange land whose snows surround the Pole;  
 The Moose, the antler'd Deer, the genial Bear  
 Range unprovoked wilds unexplored by Man;  
 The Beaver's architecture dams the streams;  
 110. And great fish in innumerable lakes  
 Flash their cold silver where the mirror'd sky  
 Is framed in high impending rock; where woodlands  
 Unmask the boyish unrestrain'd cascades,  
 Whose leaping lights flash back the laughing sun.

115. Laurentia! Superb Laurentia!  
 Thy mountains in the garments of the cloud,  
 The rivers pouring down o'er crystal leagues  
 Their glassy waters to the solemn sea,  
 Thine isle-gemm'd lakes, thine old, old solitudes,  
 120. Thy woodland courses where impetuous fires  
 Race madly o'er the desolated plain,  
 Thy water ways, where dwarf'd voyageurs pursue  
 The tenour of their uncompanioned way,  
 Thy sad-hued silent woodlands, where the snow  
 125. Lurks all the summer long, and sheets the moss,  
 And weighs the tree boughs down for half the year—  
 Oh! All thy mountains, plains, lakes, seas, and snows  
 Are fraught with mighty teachings unto Man—  
 It is a land of solitude and toil  
 130. Where Man with nature and himself may dwell,  
 And learn the mystery of life and death,  
 And read the story of the distant past,



And mighty promise of great things to be ;  
It is a stately temple where are said  
135. By wind, and flutt'ring leaf, and rippling stream,  
And all the eloquence of utter silence,  
By congregation of all living things  
The ceaseless Crede : " I do indeed believe ;"  
It is a shrine where all the dread, blind Laws  
140. Wield the huge Forces that command the World—  
It is a Book o'er which Mankind may pore,  
And read the symbols and the signs of God.

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